Daily Report

Latin America

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Regional Leaders Discuss EU-Mercosur Agreement

Argentine Minister: No 'Split' With U.S.

PY1512013095 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2050 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Madrid, 14 Dec (EFE) — Argentine Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today categorically denied that the EU-Mercosur [Common Market of the South] agreement that will be signed on 15 December presupposes a split with the United States and its project to create a free trade zone within the Americas.

"In no way is this true. I categorically deny it," Di Tella stressed. He believes that the fact that Mercosur (Common Market of the South, which includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay) has been selected as a valid spokesman by the EU is "very important."

Regarding trade matters, he told EFE that "the more the better," but "everything must be done in an orderly way."

In this respect, Di Tella recalled that Mercosur is negotiating with Chile and Bolivia to create a free trade zone, and that the plan that was outlined in the 1994 Miami Summit, in which the leaders of the American continent promised to create an area of free exchange in 2005, is still pending.

He stated that the interregional framework agreement between the EU and Mercosur, which seeks to strengthen political, economic, and cultural ties in order to achieve a future free trade zone with more than 580 million consumers "is not bound by deadlines."

The negotiations to achieve that objective will last for approximately five years, according to those in charge within the EU, although Di Tella stated that the sequence could be reduced and "the length of the process could be arranged before the year 2000." [passage omitted]

Argentina's Menem on 'Brilliant' Pact

BR1412150495 Madrid EL PAIS in Spanish 14 Dec 95 p 15

[Article by President Carlos Menem: "A New Alliance: EU-Mercosur"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of the third millennium, globalization is creating new challenges calling for intelligent and creative responses to cope with the major international transformations. The conventional concept of the national state is being enriched and completed by dynamics of association with new regional areas.

Along these lines — and within the framework of the European Summit — the heads of state and government of the EU together with the presidents of Mercosur [Common Market of the South] will jointly sign, at the Royal Palace in Madrid, a framework agreement for interregional cooperation that signals a qualitative leap in mutual relations, orienting them toward a genuine economic alliance based on firm commitments to cooperation and free trade.

A smooth mechanism for political dialogue has also been established between the parties, given that the consolidation of democracy is a high priority common interest. Sharing a same political culture encourages understanding and guarantees that the ongoing efforts required by the changes in our means of production will be made.

Mercosur is the answer which Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay gave in 1991 to take up the challenge created by domestic, regional, and global changes. Beginning in January 1995 it was made a genuine customs union with a common external tariff. One of my government's foreign policy priorities is economic and political cooperation with neighboring nations. We are leaving behind the age of conflict, replacing it with the more intelligent path of integration. The political stability and economic growth of the Mercosur countries has created a spectacular chain reaction that has led to an increase in trade and a continuous flow of foreign investment. Our countries have undertaken to create a customs union and common institutions, and to put together a broad market of 210 million consumers. This alliance between democratic nations gave the EU the possibility of having — for the first time — a viable interlocutor in South America.

Mercosur accounts for 55 percent of Latin America's gross national product. It is also the biggest industrial, technological, and financial concentration south of the United States.

The EU is Mercosur's leading trading partner. The impressive growth of overall EU-Mercosur trade reached $35 million in 1995. Europe also holds a privileged place where direct investment is concerned. Mercosur receives 70 percent of European investment in Latin America — including the biggest investments. These investments include strategic areas like telecommunications, energy, banking, air transport, fisheries, tourism, automotive industries, construction, petrochemicals, chemicals, and pharmaceutical laboratories.

In the process of modernization and openness being advanced by the Mercosur countries the contribution made by European companies stands out. In the case of Argentina, the presence of Spanish capital in the government's planned public utilities privatization program is

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notable. These Spanish investments total $7 billion, and are continuing to grow.

The Madrid agreement is the starting point for a closer and more promising relation between the partners. The areas included in the EU-Mercosur agreement are vast and interesting. A dialogue has been initiated to advance the gradual and mutual process of deregulating trade exchanges. The areas of cooperation included are very broad, such as cutting tariff barriers, encouraging investment, cooperating on plant health standards, industrial quality policies, technical customs cooperation, statistical information, databases, intellectual property, avoiding double taxation, and meetings between businesses. There is also collaboration in other specific areas of common interest such as transport, communications, science, energy, culture, the environment, and the fight against drug-trafficking.

The participation of Argentina and Mercosur in a trade liberalization agreement with the EU is part of a policy of open regionalism.

We do not conceive of Mercosur as a closed, protectionist block. The agreement reached is confirmation that the policy of openness and deregulation adopted by our countries is a strategic decision that cannot be reversed, and that all the agreements which make it possible to intensify commercial and political relations with different areas and regions are welcome.

The fact that the brilliant conclusion of the EU-Mercosur agreement is being signed under the Spanish presidency of the EU adds a special significance. The efforts made by the government, as well as by the Spanish leadership and business class, to deepen relations between Europe and Mercosur are widely acknowledged and appreciated by our countries.

This framework cooperation agreement initiates a new stage in relations between Europe and South America. Ahead of us lies the challenge of breathing life into the treaty, increasing the trade in goods and services, and generating new flows of investment and work.

I firmly believe that in taking this step we are laying the foundation for a better world, built on the common values of democracy and freedom, and encouraging economic growth and development along with social justice. I know that this conviction is also shared not only by the Argentine people, but also by the peoples of Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

In the approaching new world of economic areas, Mercosur — together with the EU, NAFTA, and the Pacific Rim — is emerging as the fourth largest market, with a growing role in world trade.

Paraguay's Wasmosy: Accord 'Challenge'

PY1412180295 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1405 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Madrid, 14 Dec (AFP-NA) — Upon arriving in the Spanish capital, Paraguayan President Juan Carlos Wasmosy emphasized on 14 December that the cooperation agreement between the EU and the Mercosur [Common Market of the South] that will be signed on 15 December in Madrid represents "a great challenge."

Wasmosy emphasized that this agreement will be signed under Spain's pro-tempore EU presidency. He noted that Spain "has opened Europe's gates for us."

The Paraguayan president noted that this agreement represents "a great responsibility for us" and demonstrates "the generous spirit of the EU countries."

The presidents of Mercosur countries (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil) will sign this agreement during the EU summit of heads of state and heads of government in the Spanish capital on 15 and 16 December.

The Paraguayan president also emphasized that Mercosur has achieved an agreement with Bolivia on some free trade operations and hopes to formalize other operations with Chile shortly. Wasmosy added that it involves "creating a sort of hinge with the Andean Pact to unite all the Americas."

Before participating in the agreement's signing ceremony, the Paraguayan president will participate in a working breakfast with Jose Maria Aznar, the Popular Party (PP, conservative) president, on the morning of 15 December.

Uruguay's Sanguinetti on Pact 'Reality'

PY1412154295 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1839 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Madrid, 13 Dec (EFE) — Uruguayan President Julio Maria Sanguinetti today told EFE that the cooperation agreement the EU and the Mercosur [Common Market of the South] will sign on 15 December in Madrid represents an economic reality, not just a utopian proposal or a groundless hope.

The Uruguayan president, who is the pro-tempore Mercosur president, emphasized: "This is a very significant agreement as it is the first one between two regions. It is the first agreement between two common markets. It is the first such agreement." The Mercosur also includes Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.

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Sanguinetti arrived in the Spanish capital early on the morning of 13 December. He is convinced that the agreement that will be signed on 15 December "opens a full range of possibilities between two very important and growing regions."

The Uruguayan president said: "It is not by chance. The EU is the top investor in Mercosur countries. For us, it is the most important market. We have a common history. Thus, this agreement is a reality, not just a utopian proposal or a groundless hope."

The Uruguayan president added: "I believe that during the five years we have to achieve deregulation, we will advance as quickly as required by current times."

Asked if the EU and Mercosur association represents estrangement from the North American economic bloc (NAFTA; the United States, Canada, and Mexico), Sanguinetti responded: "No."

He added: "I would say it is no longer possible to consider aligned or enclosed systems in today's world. It is an open world in which we must remain open to all systems, striving to discover the most realistic systems for advancing."

The Uruguayan president will end his visit to Madrid on 16 December. He is scheduled to meet Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, the EU pro-tempore president, this afternoon. [passage omitted]

Uruguay's Sanguinetti on Pact, ETA

PY1412180095 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1418 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Madrid, 14 Dec (AFP-NA) — Referring to members of the Basque terrorist organization ETA [Basque Fatherland and Liberty], Uruguayan President Julio Maria Sanguinetti today emphasized in Madrid: "Uruguay has never been and will never be a haven for any antidemocratic movement."

The Uruguayan president, who on 15 December will participate in the signing ceremony of a cooperation agreement between the Mercosur [Common Market of the South] and the EU in Madrid, added: "Uruguay has a state of law, with very friendly relations with Spain."

With regard to Spain's possible extradition request for ETA members living in Uruguay, Sanguinetti said: "Extradition requests will be pursued with the appropriate seriousness and care."

The Uruguayan president said Mercosur countries (Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Paraguay) historically have closer trade and cultural ties with Europe than with the United States.

Sanguinetti met Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez on 13 December. They especially reviewed the relations between Europe and Mercosur, "with a very general view of existing problems."

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Honduran President Opens Central American Summit

PA1412190395 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 13 Dec 95

[Speech by Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina to inaugurate the 17th Central American Presidential Summit at the Arab-Honduran Club in San Pedro Sula on 13 December — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Words indistinct] of the Republic of El Salvador, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Guatemala, Mr. Prime Minister of Belize, Mrs. Nicaraguan President, Messrs. diplomats, illustrious representative of the Catholic Church, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Governor, distinguished First Ladies, Mr. President of the National Congress of the Supreme Court of Justice, appointees to the presidency of the republic, ladies, and gentlemen:

We are celebrating this 17th Central American Presidential Summit in San Pedro Sula, a city that Honduras is proud of and the hom of hospitable people who have an unyielding devotion for work, progress, and democracy. Within this framework, Messrs. Presidents, Mr. Prime Minister, and Mrs. Vice President, we are pleased to give you a warm and brotherly welcome on behalf of our people and our government. You can feel like being in your home country.

Almost 10 years have passed since the memorable date when Central American leaders, with a clear awareness of their common destiny, began the Esquipulas Process. That concept, among others, was a key expression of determination geared toward emphasizing the region's autonomy and the capacity of our countries to discuss and solve their problems within the strictest compliance with the self- determination of peoples. Since then, the successive presidential summits have confirmed this goal to shape the future of the Central American countries from a Central American point of view. Much has been accompliished since those days, and much more remains to be done to achieve greater levels of integration and development for our region. The victories won — it is quite fair to admit — are the result of that shared vision and the interaction of many interests, without the foreign interferences that have pervaded the dramatic history of Central America.

The Alliance for Sustainable Development is the most recent and tangible proof of this. The alliance is an original, unprecedented proposal to conceive regional development in other schemes. In addition, the Alliance is a Central American creation and a contribution to the rest of the world. If we must judge the serious nature of these summits from the Alliance, we are fully entitled to expect a growing respect from the international community.

Obviously, it has not been easy to make plans and take action. Two situations have made this very difficult: first, the accelerated — if not excessive — growth of the regional agenda, whose scope of action now includes topics that have been previously excluded from the integration program, and second, the relative technical and financial inability at both national and regional levels to adequately respond to increasing commitments that result from the summits.

The new topics, of course, are not a product of excessive zeal to regionalize actions, but rather a timely response to worldwide trends toward association and interaction.

It is a contemporary phenomenon that characterizes the end of this century: The organization of countries in blocs to integrate or cooperate for economic, social, or political purposes with a view toward expansion, according to the intentions of the initial project. Thus, the difficulty is not the large number of issues. Rather, it is the reorganization of issues into an action plan with their prioritization toward achieving specific results within a certain timeframe.

The rationalization of our commitments requires a differentiation between integrationist commitments resulting from an original pact and those commitments stemming from pure cooperation, which are typical of international relations. The nature of competence and the organization of the corresponding institutional body will depend on this.

Getting our Central American agenda in order and creating an action plan with a clear sense of evolution of our integration process is an extremely important task. By doing so, we will organize our capacity to provide internal and regional responses at the institutional level. In addition, it should be pointed out that there must be a relationship between the issues in our region and those going on internationally, in light of the existing commitments. Without this coordinated action, it is not possible to place our integration scheme into a world context.

The presidents of Central America began this task of balance and priority at the special summit held in El Salvador in October. Here in San Pedro Sula, we continue the task. We will seek consensus on the issues that we will devote our attention to in the future. The immense and valuable work of great complexity and dynamism accomplished since the first summit in Esquipulas, Guatemala, forces us to reflect. We need to regroup our forces, redefine our course, and establish the

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path toward the integration of our countries, knowing our limitations, differences, and potential.

We must thoroughly analyze the current Central American institutional structure and proceed to reform and strengthen it as soon as possible. There is no doubt that this is an imperious need, not only in view of the new sectors produced by the integration program, but also in our search for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the current competitive world.

Ever since the previous regular summit, we have advised our governments with the financial support of the Inter-American Development Bank. We must also advise that each country organize itself internally for integration, because experience shows that imbalances between national and regional entities disperses and weakens the decisionmaking process and favors unnecessary bureaucratic growth.

It is impossible to stop progress while adjustments and changes take place. Assessing is not the same as stopping. Instead, it is reconsidering the situation and immediately drafting a working agenda for the area's development. It is essential to not only keep debating the proposed and agreed upon subjects, but to continue to be alert to urgent international matters as well as those that emerge daily. It is for this latter reason that during this summit we will discuss security, a very important and interesting subject for the people of the region. We will also consider our governments' deep commitment to democracy as the Central American people's way of life. Our conviction to protect the people and their properties binds us to give security priority status in the region. The continuation of recent armed conflicts, the peace process, the corruption that has worsened in the most recent decade, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, the aggravation of common crime, and the organization and internationalization of crime have alarmed and instilled deep concern in our peoples. No one can escape most of these internationalized scourges.

Old truths are being forgotten. We must put them back on the list of actions to take. Crime is not only a problem of the police or state security agencies. It is a problem of society in general. Society should increase the actions of these agencies created to combat crime. The proper joint action of governments and civil society in the struggle against crime is a requirement for and a guarantee of success in the fight against this tremendous scourge. It would be a serious error for a civil society to simply take a contemplative stance in the government's fight against crime. Such a stance of merely observing weakens the government and strengthens crime.

Therefore, I am calling all sectors of society to join in this fight against various forms of crime, under new organizations. Regional action must come into play whenever national action is not enough. Crime does not recognize borders. The passage from one territory to another is a recourse used in favor of impunity. Consequently, joint action becomes essential, precisely to fight crime. Today, like yesterday, Central American unity is indispensable in fighting every form of personal or collective violence that undermines or harms people or governments. Social peace is an essential requirement of democracy and life in our nations. Without peace, anarchy is established, and the empire of brute force is aided. Central America cannot at all tolerate this situation. It is vital to correct it, particularly after the many sacrifices that many generations that overcame authoritarianism and disorder. History cannot be turned back.

We are meeting today to sign the Democratic Security Treaty of Central America and to discuss the other agenda items with the firm determination to enforce the treaty as soon as possible in each of our countries. For this, we are relying on the support of civil societies in their many forms. These international juridical instruments ensure concerted action in the region at a time when it is needed the most.

From the Mexican border to the Colombian border, Central America will be neither the refuge of criminals nor the bridge for criminal traffickers. We want a zone where justice and respect for human rights shines and where a new way of understanding the relationship among men and between man and nature prevails.

Madame Sadako Ogata, UN high commissioner for refugees, has said with much accuracy that one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century will be to guarantee safety and liberty to all human beings of the planet. In Central America we accepted this challenge and we will best express it here today in San Pedro Sula at this 17th summit of Central American presidents.

With the signing of these documents and others already in effect or about to take force, we have expanded the sphere of the so-called Central American Public Law [Derecho Publico Centroamericano], which is the basis of our integration process.

Therefore, it would be relevant to systematize these legal entities and give them a full sense of unity and coherence. In essence, these are the issues that will occupy our time at this 17th summit of Central American presidents. We will reorganize our work and take a step forward in Central American democratic security. This, of course, will not prevent us from taking advantage of the meeting — as often happens — to exchange points of view on other important issues [three-second break in reception] free trade,

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[word indistinct], the contents of Tuxtla Gutierrez II, the progress made in the struggle against corruption, the democratization of political processes, and other similar issues.

The president of the neighboring Republic of Guatemala, my dear friend Don Ramiro De Leon Carpio, is attending this summit while an electoral process is under way in his country. In January, a new presidential mandate will be defined in a runoff election. It is pertinent, therefore, to render to the illustrious comrade the highest recognition for his work at this summit, and especially for having brought to these halls the invincible hope of a reconciled, democratic, and prosperous Guatemala. I hereby inform you, President Don Ramiro De Leon Carpio, that you hold a place of honor among your Central American friends, and that we will never forget your contribution to the creation and operation of the Alliance for Sustainable Development. [applause]

Messrs. dignitaries, Honduras is experiencing an unprecedented process of convergence of political, business and labor forces and the government. Thanks to the historical circumstances that have been created during this extraordinary end of the century and to the legitimacy of governments, political parties, and labor unions, we have taken steps that were unimagined only a few years ago. We have initiated a convergence process that already has a basic organizational structure and has already formulated its great goals around a national plan, the core points of which are above its members' incidental or recurrent views.

The National Convergence Council, Conacon, which we created, allows a meeting venue for diverse and fundamental political, economic, social, and cultural forces. The Honduran people have decided to join our goals to achieve sustained effort for relatively long periods of time. We have also decided to make convergence a method, a form of behavior that will allow us to maintain the national unity that is so necessary to combat the vices that we have denounced, and to see progress toward the future above and beyond the partisanship or dividing lines that separate us.

Despite the newness of the Conacon, it has already begun to produce clear victories and has shown us the enormous potential that can be mobilized in the country's favor. In every effort made in the lives of nations, there are isolated voices that obstinately express pessimism, while other voices express naive optimism and separate dreams from objective reality.

But our purpose is real and practical and advances due to the nobility of its ideas. The majority of the Honduran population view with increasing and growing credibility that the national effort will overcome obstacles and will achieve successes of capital importance for this noble nation.

We have already established the course, objectives, and goals. We are now breaking down and programming the national agenda. Very soon we will move into the period of specialized forums in which the main players of social and economic development will join hands to reach accords on their propositions and actions, keeping with the broad interests of the entire nation.

The Alliance for Sustainable Development is an agreement at the Central American level. Additionally, a concerted accord is a variable of the Alliance for Sustainable Development at the Honduran level.

I would like now to refer briefly to the participation of society in these presidential summits. The Peace and Development Conference held in Tegucigalpa last year decided to maintain dialogue with the organized representatives of society when considered applicable. The purpose of this was to favor concerted accords on the most important topics of regional development. In 1955 [as heard], it was not possible to hold this conference due to the tight agenda of governments. We hope to do this next year. With this, I believe I interpret correctly the desire of my colleagues and my own.

Upon declaring this 17th Summit opened, on the 50th anniversary of the UN founding, I express my desire that the Creator, on whose behalf the greatest soldier of Central America gave his soul, guide our work and bless Central American homes during this Christmas season. Thank you very much. [applause]

Press Release on 'Incident' Issued

PA1412170895 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 14 Dec 95

[Press release issued by the Honduran Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic read by Press Secretariat official Norma Chower de Gruyan on 14 November; from the "Morning Paper" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Press release: In view of the regrettable incident that took place on 13 December in the area around the Social Club in the city of San Pedro Sula, site of the 17th Summit of Central American and Belizean Presidents, in which several people were wounded during a demonstration sponsored by mass groups, the Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic informs the people of Honduras that:

1) The government deeply regrets and condemns the incident that took place, given its social philosophy centers on the free expression of the people as well as on the protection of human rights in general.

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2) At no time was there any physical or verbal clash between the police and demonstrators, as they maintained a respectful distance of approximately 10 meters.

3) The shield of one of the policemen deployed at a roadblock received a bullet impact, but despite that fact, the calm required in the face of the situation as the one that took place was maintained.

4) In view of the possibility there may be people bent on discrediting the country during the 17th Summit of Central American and Belizean Presidents, the government has ordered the Criminal Investigation Department, DIC, to proceed immediately to conduct the appropriate investigation to establish the responsibility of whoever may be involved in this incident.

Issued in San Pedro Sula on 14 December 1995.

Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic.

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Cuba

Reportage on Castro's Visit to SRV, Japan, Canada

Addresses Welcome Ceremony in SRV

PA1412160995 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 12 Dec 95

[Report on speech by President Fidel Castro at the official welcome ceremony in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; date not given; from the "NTV" newscast — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The official welcome for the commander in chief and his delegation in Ho Chi Minh City took place at a reception at the Reunification Palace. Present during the ceremony were Vo Tran Chi, Communist Party of Vietnam [CPV] Committee Secretary in Ho Chi Minh City, Truong Tan Sang, chairman of the City's People's Committee, and (Pham Chanh Truc), chairman of the City's People's Council. The CPV Committee Secretary in Ho Chi Minh City and the commander in chief spoke on this occasion.

[Begin recording] [Vo Tran Chi] Twenty-two years have elapsed since that day when you visited Vietnam, when our country was still at war. This is the first time that Ho Chi Minh City has the honor of officially receiving you, an honor for which we have waited a long time. Allow me to express the happiness and emotion which our more than four million citizens feel for you, and our hope that during your stay in this city you will enjoy the immense love and affection of our people just as if you were living and working in Cuba. [applause]

[Castro] The companeros [word indistinct] can remember when I visited Vietnam some 22 years ago. Those were very difficult and hard times. I came from a nonaligned countries meeting in Yemen, and I made a stopover in India. There I received the bitter news of the coup d'etat in Chile which had lead to the overthrow and death of that great friend of progressive peoples [word indistinct] that great friend of Vietnam and Cuba. I had prepared a plan to [indistinct words]. Due to those events I was forced to [indistinct words]. Nevertheless, I had the opportunity to visit the south, here [words indistinct]. Along the way, I saw the destruction of the war. Thousand and thousands of bombs dropped on the Vietnamese people, against all communications systems, against [words indistinct]. Each bridgehead was riddled with craters [panal de hoyos] in an attempt to destroy all communications. We had to travel along many paths and cross over many rivers on makeshift bridges to reach the McNamara line on the 17th parallel. There, the Vietnamese who were accompanying me showed me the places where battles had recently taken place when the great battles of [names indistinct] took place. I was amazed to see how the Vietnamese fighters had built those extraordinary defenses filled with trenches, cannons, and steel fortifications. They had to surrender to the drive and courage of the Vietnamese fighters. I met many combatants and many heroes. I met with [words indistinct] and I remember a flag [words indistinct] [applause]. There are photographs of that visit. Very beautiful images, and the photograph of that flag which I treasure so much. However, the country was still being unified. A large part of the south still had to be liberated. Time had to pass by. Much work still had to be done to prepare for the final battle. Those were difficult, complex times.

The Vietnamese leadership, with great wisdom, made several agreements that included the withdrawal of those Yankee troops. Those troops had been defeated, and they had decided to withdraw. Nevertheless, there was still an enormous puppet army totalling nearly one million men, armed to their teeth with the best aircraft, the best tanks, the best weapons provided by the United States. Regardless of this, I had no doubt whatsoever that when those troops clashed with the patriotic Vietnamese troops, they would never resist more than a few days. I can still recall the emotion I experienced on that occasion and the certainty in the final victory. It is for this reason why, several months afterwards, when the last battles began and the world received the news of the liberation of this city, at the time known as Saigon, and from then on called Ho Chi Minh City, the world commemorated that victory as one of the greatest accomplishments of the modern era. On the way over we were talking with our Vietnamese escorts on how much money the United States had spent here in South Vietnam. Nearly $1 trillion to prevent the union, the independence. In a few days Ho Chi Minh's dream came through when he said that there was nothing more precious than independence and liberty, and that after the war they would build a Vietnam 100 times more beautiful. What an extraordinary man! What a far-reaching outlook! What deep conviction! How prophetic! Vietnam became one country 15 years ago [as heard]. Fifteen years after he died, the union, independence, sovereignty came through. Today, the sacred task of remodeling and reconstructing a Vietnam 100 times more beautiful is taking place. Neither can we recall the advise of Ho Chi Minh to the international communist movement to unite, and remain united [as heard]. How Ho Chi Minh would have despaired if he had witnessed the fall of the European socialist block, if he had witnessed the disintegration of the Soviet Union! Such a hard and terrible blow to the world and the rest of the nations of the world such as Vietnam. However, since rightful ideas are invincible, the countries that

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persisted in socialism did not disintegrate. They were able to fight back, capable of persevering in socialism, and were able to resisting just as Vietnam did, just as Cuba has been able to do, and just as other countries close to Vietnam are doing. This is why I am optimistic. Those who applauded the fall of the European socialist block and the disintegration of the USSR, came to believe that it marked the end of socialism. It is possible that the end of socialism may be a long time away. It is possible that the beginning of the fall of capitalism may be quite close. Those who believed that socialism was about to disappear, believed that capitalism would be eternal. Nothing can be eternal, much less capitalism which is so saturated with contradictions and injustices. Those capitalists who applauded are now afraid of what is taking place in the former USSR, and of what is taking place in the former European socialist countries. There are many individuals in those countries who faltered, and are now beginning to rethink, to meditate. They have become aware of the lack of discipline and the constant chaos. They have become aware that capitalism has no future and that only those countries that persist in socialism, despite tremendous adversities on account of having practically remained isolated, by resorting to intelligence, resorting to courage, resorting to a creative spirit, are capable of introducing new concepts that will not only save socialism but will also perfect it and someday take it to a definite victory. It is because of this why nowadays, we can say that the future and we can say it with more conviction than ever, belongs to socialism. [applause]

Capitalism is in crisis. It does not have the solutions for the problems of the world. Only peoples like Vietnam, Cuba, and others, did not abandon their principles, the Marxist-Leninist principles, and the principles of a people's democratic government and together with the Communist Party leaderships are moving forward and are enjoying the success not experienced in other countries of the world.

Cuba is currently in a special period. It is very close to the United States, only 90 miles away. There is even a military base in our own territory. A rigorous, criminal blockade has been imposed on Cuba because they cannot allow socialism to exist in the Caribbean and in Latin America: Socialism on the U.S. doorstep. They wanted us to come apart too, but more than five years have gone by and we remain firm with the support of the international public opinion [words indistinct] we will continue to resist. We begin to move forward. Others have tumbled down. I say they have tumbled down like the egg white when it is beaten. [as heard] Our revolution was not made of egg white and I am sure that the egg white that tumbled down in some socialist countries will turn into iron and they will once again embrace and defend the ideas of justice they defended one day when their conscience (?awakens), when they repent, and when they see those orderly countries where everyone has something to wear, something to eat, and medicines, without crimes and without mafias. When all of those countries [words indistinct] historic crime they committed by destroying socialism. History will save a place of honor for [words indistinct] in difficult situations were able to uphold and defend the principles of socialism and the lives of these two peoples will exist like twin, inseparable brothers, Vietnam and Cuba. [applause]

A few minutes ago when this event was being announced, they mentioned the names of many persons, who wrote heroic pages. For us it was a source of deep satisfaction to listen to those names because they are the symbols of the heroism that was observed for dozens of years in this people, who shed so much blood when others were doing business with the blood of Vietnam, when others were improving their economy at the expense of Vietnamese blood, when others were making progress at the expense of Vietnam, whom they thought was destroyed. Today many of those peoples recognize Vietnam, admire Vietnam, and make peace with Vietnam, and cooperate with Vietnam. The noble Vietnamese blood turned into gold and money [words indistinct] is growing more than any other people [words indistinct] prosperity, and happiness for its people. I want to embrace from the bottom of my heart so many heroes present here, so many heroes mentioned here, those who threw bombs at that building, those who spent many years in prison, and the relatives, the wives, and the widows of the martyrs who fell.

So much honor, so much glory, and so much merit is not often seen in the world. That is why we, Cubans, so affectionately received by you, feel great happiness, great honor, and great glory. We have received the tribute of your hospitality, the affection [words indistinct].

Long live our independence and sovereignty! Nothing is more beautiful than Ho Chi Minh. Long live the Vietnam that is built today! [applause]

Long live the exploited peoples of the world, who one day will also build a future much more beautiful! Long live the friendship and long live the eternal brotherhood between the peoples of Vietnam and Cuba! [end recording]

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Holds News Conference in Tokyo

PA1412155695 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 14 Dec 95

[News conference by President Fidel Castro with unidentified Japanese and foreign reporters and an unidentified moderator in Tokyo, Japan; date not given; from the "NTV" newscast — recorded, Castro's statements in Spanish with passage by passage translation into Japanese; reporters' statements in Japanese with passage by passage translation into Spanish]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Moderator] I want to request your help in making quick this news conference by Commander Fidel Castro during his stay in Tokyo so that you will be able to voice your interests; thus, we want to ask you that when it is your turn to speak and to ask questions, identify yourself and the media you represent. Let us start.

[Reporter] Do you believe your trip was productive and why? When I talk about the East, I am referring to the three countries you visited.

[Castro] This explanation is fine, because I was born in eastern Cuba in a province called Oriente. This is not my first visit. I visited Vietnam 22 years ago during the war. That time I visited Korea, the DPRK, which is headed by Kim Il-song. This time I visited China for the first time and Vietnam, which is in the midst of its economic changes. It was a big effort. I had made the commitment to visit these countries, and it has been extremely useful for me, as I directly observed the events taking place, which constitute highly valuable information and a lesson.

I made a stopover in Japan en route to Cuba. I believe I was lucky, because I have gotten to know this country, which has lived in the minds of all people in the last few centuries. I was pleased to set foot on its soil, to know its hospitable people, and to observe the colossal work it has done. I have seen many things, and the results will emanate from a reflection. [sentence as heard]

[Moderator] Another question by another reporter.

[Reporter] Mr. [words indistinct] from the [words indistinct] newspaper. Some Cuban citizens have said lately there is a social difference among the people, among the those who have access to dollars and those who do not. Do you believe this phenomenon is a necessary one in perfecting socialism?

[Castro] True, those differences you mentioned are present. It is something necessary given the current circumstances, because real events were taking place following the huge economic crisis prompted by the sudden disappearance of the socialist bloc and the disintegration of the USSR. The dollar was circulating, the dollar, or the yen, or the Deutsch mark, or the French franc, as the result of a situation in which we lost 80 percent of our exports and 75 percent of our imports. As a matter of fact, the convertible foreign exchange started circulating but not as a definite and unlimited measure.

This measure will be taken at the appropriate time once we overcome the difficulties in working with a single currency in our country and once we are in a position to deal with the difficulties this is causing us. This problem is not a serious once for our country. That currency is then distributed among many people in many instances.

[Reporter] Yes, it has a great impact on the Cuban economy, and we know the sugar industry and its trade have been seriously affected. Do you believe sugar production will recover during this harvest and the harvests of coming years? You have just visited the PRC and the SRV. How will future trade develop with those countries? Have certain new issues been discussed with those countries? What are future trade plans with the PRC and the SRV?

[Castro] He has put several questions into one. I will try to reply to three questions with a single reply. I do not want to tell a long story. Sugar production received a heavy blow because we suddenly ran out of fertilizers, were without fuel, spare parts, and raw materials; this took its toll. [Word indistinct] fertilization lasted two years more or less, but production dropped from seven million in 1992 to four million in 1993. It then went down further in 1994 and 1995. It reached 3.3 million in 1995, but sugarcane agriculture is beginning to pick up now.

We were granted credits to be repaid with sugar. The credits are needed to purchase fertilizers, fuel, metals, and raw materials. We expect to raise 1996 production by about 30 percent and to produce more than four million tons of sugar. We are already working on the 1997 harvest, and sugar production should continue to increase by a high rate.

We have the markets. If we had more sugar we could export more to Vietnam and China. These are countries that are moving ahead, and their consumption is rising. Relations with those two countries are very good. There are no difficulties in increasing trade. The main thing is to increase production in order to export more and import more from those countries. My visit was one of friendship, a political visit, not a commercial one. Increases in trade will be the result of the successes China, Vietnam, and Cuba are able to attain.

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[Moderator] There are several raised hands. I am going to try to keep to the same order.

[Castro] All hands are raised. You are not keeping any order here. That person raised his hand about half an hour ago. [laughs] I see it is only a recorder he is holding up. [laughs]

[Dominguez] Carlos Dominguez of EFE, Spain. Mr. President, it has been said that you had to make a technical stopover in Japan but have asked for Japan's support in lifting the U.S. economic blockade. What specific actions are you expecting Japan to do?

[Castro] I have not come to Japan to request this. I repeat: I came to Japan on a stopover, because I have to continue my journey.

You are a Spaniard, right? You know that when Columbus discovered Cuba, he thought he had arrived in Japan, and now when I thought I was going to Cuba, I discovered Japan. We have talked briefly about various subjects. I think all countries can try to improve international relations and the relations between Cuba and the United States. I think Japan is an important and prestigious country, a close friend of the United States, one which could give the United States good advice. Among other countries, Japan could tell the United States to improve its relations with its small Caribbean neighbor, yet I have not made a priority request. I just spoke, commented, have said that perhaps Japan could help improve the relations between Cuba and the United States, but this is not a key matter in my technical stopover.

[Reporter] Would you please tell us what is the reason for a Cuban socialist or communist regime in the world at present?

[Castro] What did you say? Please repeat.

[Reporter] What is the reason for a socialist or communist regime in Cuba and the world at present?

[Castro] I will answer you with another question. What is the reason for a capitalist or pro-capitalist regime in the world at present? It is the most absurd thing. Capitalism has not solved any problem. We must give socialism a chance. It is as if I were to ask for a reason for a feudal or a slave oriented regime in the world at present. I think we must have a socialist regime in the present world to end the hunger, disease, illiteracy, underdevelopment, exploitation, and chaos of thousands of millions of people in the world.

[Reporter] The United States waged a war on Vietnam, but the two countries are now at peace; nevertheless, the United States is still applying a hostile policy against Cuba. What do you think of this U.S. position? I would also like to ask whether Cuba has any specific plans to seek a rapprochement with the United States. I would like to add this point. I was in Cuba for six months in 1971 participating as a brigade member in the sugar harvest. Is Cuba planning to invite international brigades again as it was done at that time?

[Castro] To fight? The first question [words indistinct].

I believe the United States made one of history's worst mistakes in Vietnam. I was in Vietnam a few hours ago, traveled by road, and saw a very populated region in a country that was colonized and that became very poor. They are an admirable people, really deserving of glory. I saw them planting rice by hand. Why did the United States invade that country and drop on it more bombs than those dropped during World War II? One cannot understand this incredibly crazy action.

I visited the combat positions of the Vietnamese patriots near former Saigon, in [word indistinct]. The Vietnamese built 250 km of underground tunnels there. Tens of thousands of bombs were dropped on the Vietnamese, and it was not possible to defeat them.

The Vietnamese were poor, lacked food, had almost no weapons. They confronted the power with the largest economic, military, and technological force in the world. I tried to walk through the tunnels but was unable to because I weigh more than the average Vietnamese and am taller than the average Vietnamese. The North Americans could not enter either. They are fat, tall, loaded with knapsacks, Coca-Colas, food, bullets, knives. The North Americans became aware of the unjust situation, and this contributed much to the end of the war.

The Vietnamese are noble, good, humane, and generous people. They demonstrated respect for prisoners and did not commit war crimes. The North Americans know this now and support the change of policy for Vietnam.

We did not have such a terrible war in Cuba, but they committed many crimes against our people: Sabotage, fires, bombs, air raids, mercenary invasions such as that of Giron, pirate attacks, threats of invasion. They were on the verge of provoking a world war in Cuba in October 1962.

War was averted, but the hostile situation has been maintained for 35 years. The United States believes that Latin America is U.S. property and that Cuba is U.S. property. That country will not forgive us for having a socialist regime there, near its coasts.

Thus, they are already making peace with everybody. They made peace with China a long time ago. They made peace with Vietnam. They are somehow making

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peace with Korea too. Not with Cuba, however, because Cuba is a neighbor of the United States. Now, he has asked what we can do to make the United States love us. There are times when a man falls in love with a woman and does many things for the woman to love him. The more things he does, the less she loves him. What can we do, a small country against the big northern colossus? Resist, fight against the blockade, withstand the sacrifices, keep the dignity. That is the only path; that is the only path to respect the peoples. We will resist 35 years; we have resisted for more than 35 years. We are willing to resist more than 100 years. They will respect us some day; they will understand some day that they cannot crush Cuba.

We may not have to wait too long. Maybe they will get bored. There are contradictions in the United States. There are many businessmen who want to maintain normal relations with Cuba. There are many intellectuals, many newspaper and television editors who want to maintain normal relations with Cuba. Every day, there are more North American citizens who want to maintain normal relations with Cuba.

What the United States is doing to Cuba is a shame, a dishonor. It is something that does not have and will never have a justification. We have to learn from the Oriental people, then, to be patient, and we have to wait for hostilities to end. We will never sell our independence and the country's sovereignty. We will never sell the revolution. Money cannot purchase it.

[Reporter] Part of the Cuban foreign debt is owed to Japan. We believe the economic relations between the two countries will not be better if we do not seek a path to solve this problem. We know that this visit is a stopover, and this is why we have not engaged in deep talks about this problem, but what are you planning to do to seek a solution to this problem, to improve economic relations?

[Castro] I believe he [not further identified] has increased the debt, has said it was 2.3 billion [currency not specified]. It does not agree with my figures, which are slightly lower. True, it is a huge debt. That was not the case at the beginning. At the beginning, we had a large amount of trade with Japan amounting to more than $500 million annually. We sold approximately one million tons of sugar, but sugar purchases started decreasing.

That is not the only reason, however. The debt is a new phenomenon of the past 25 years. It is a consequence of the underdevelopment and poverty of a large part of the world, a consequence of unequal exchange; therefore, the debts of all the countries of the world, not only Cuba's, have increased. Only the oil producing countries, which saw the value of oil multiply several times, were able to keep free of the debt phenomenon, but many countries that did not have oil had to fall into debt to purchase energy. That was one of the causes.

Very wealthy countries such as Mexico accrued debts of over $100 billion. Countries such as Brazil also accrued debts of almost $100 billion. Oil producing countries such as Venezuela accrued debts of over $30 billion. Latin America accrued a debt of over $500 billion, and what they have paid in interest over the past 10 years is comparable to the total amount of the debt; therefore, Cuba is not the only country that had this problem. Cuba is a country the United States has blocked, a country whose economic development and exports have been strangled by the United States. Why, then, is it strange that Cuba has accrued a debt of over one billion [currency not specified] with Japan? It is a universal phenomenon.

The Third World has a debt of $1.6 trillion.

[Unidentified interpreter, in Spanish] [Words indistinct] [laughs]

[Castro] A debt of $1.6 trillion. The Third World's debt is 1,500 times larger than Cuba's; therefore, our debt with Japan is not the result of Cuba's ill will or a lack of honesty on its part. It is the result of prevailing worldwide economic conditions, but we want to pay our debt with Japan and the interest accrued on the debt with Japan and with all other countries.

Cuba has been economically blocked by the United States. An economic war is being waged against Cuba, a point which makes it difficult for us to pay our debts. I believe the problem can be resolved. The Third World countries need help in order to develop. Cuba needs help to develop economically and to pay its pending debts.

The Third World's debt is not decreasing; on the contrary, it increases every year, which proves that the world is experiencing a crisis and that the Third World needs a solution to its problems. I spoke about this point a while back, when I explained that capitalism increasingly intensifies problems instead of resolving them.

We hope to and are resolved to strictly pay all of our international financial debts.

Let us find solutions.

There are some who want to ask questions here.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] of the newspaper YOMIURI SHIMBUN. You visited China and Vietnam.

[Castro] I visited those two countries and analyzed with them the measures they have adopted. They have

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explained them to me well. We were aware of many of them. I believe China and Vietnam are achieving extraordinary accomplishments based on new and bold ideas without renouncing socialism. China argues that the market does not define the social system, that planning does not define the social system, that they are instruments of economic development. They are not planning on resigning from socialism as a system of social justice, welfare, and development.

China first started 17 years ago and has obtained extraordinary results. China grew at an annual rate of nearly 11 percent in the past five years. The people's standard of living has been considerably increased. They plan on continuing to grow in the next five years at a rate not under 9 percent and at a slightly lower rate from 1900-1910, I mean from 2000-2010.

While Europe and Third World countries in general are making great efforts to grow, China is making great efforts to moderate its development. What I saw there is truly impressive, but they are not free of difficulties and problems; there are many. There was a tremendous demographic explosion there, and there are limited natural resources, particularly land for growing grains. They are working like ants, with high efficiency. They have achieved a high level of political stability and have managed to organize a solid leadership. There are new people, well trained people. They are hardworking, tenacious, intelligent, and are advancing at an incredible pace, a truly incredible one.

I believe China will be the country of the 21st century at the pace it is moving because of its potentially enormous economic power. They have created a peace policy. They are seeking stability and are focusing on economic development and the enormous challenges ahead of them. I saw truly marvelous, extraordinary things in China. They have found practical solutions to problems and are advancing at an accelerated rate. They already have a solid industrial base.

There is a similar situation in Vietnam although not exactly the same. I do not wish to delve on this point so as not to tire you, but this country has truly impressed me. We are also making reforms and changes and opening up in keeping to our standards, because each country must adjust its measures to its specific conditions, but there is no doubt that what is happening there deserves our attention, and you should pay attention to what is happening there, being close neighbors of China. One of the things I liked most was the spirit of peace I noticed in China, its interest for world stability and peace as essential conditions in carrying out its economic and social plans.

[Moderator] One more question.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] of Tokyo television. We understand that Cuba is trying to develop nuclear energy with Russian cooperation.

[Castro] Yes?

[Interpreter repeats herself] Nuclear energy with Russian cooperation. What are the goals of developing nuclear energy?

[Castro] We had been working in the field of nuclear energy with peaceful purposes. We were building a nuclear energy plant of almost two million kilowatts.... [pauses] to produce almost two million kilowatts. The project came to a halt when the socialist bloc dissolved and the USSR disappeared, seriously harming our economy, which was in need of that energy, given we do not have major reserves.... [pauses] We do not have coal, hydraulic power, and our island is long and small, rather, long and narrow. We have not yet discovered major oil reserves, and we need nuclear energy. We have also used nuclear research for medical purposes, for industrial purposes. We have trained thousands of engineers and technicians, but we have never aimed our effort at nuclear research for military purposes. That is what I can say. Any more?

[Moderator] One more.

[Castro] Those of you who are not tired of raising your hand.

[Moderator] You, who look surprised.

[Reporter] Certain economists warn of the danger of returning to the situation that existed in the prerevolutionary period.

[Castro] Yes. There are many theories, and nobody can accurately predict the future. Our development would pick up noticeably if the blockade were lifted, and, to be sure, these market elements and reforms have a social and political influence. We are not going to allow any of these mechanisms to operate blindly. The people—workers, peasants, students, women, not the wealthy, not the bourgeois—hold power in Cuba. The key of everything is who leads society. Our society is led by workers to defend the fatherland, independence, and the conquests of socialism. Who will win this battle? History will tell. I am convinced those who defend the most just and human ideas are the ones who will prevail. We will not return to the past when Cuba was a U.S. property. We will never allow that.

The Japanese will never again be anyone's property. The Japanese defend their industry, economy, independence in the face of the enormous pressure exerted from outside. You will never allow being anyone's colony

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again. Cuba will never allow being anyone's colony either, regardless of the economic and social system of each country. We have a big lead on the Japanese on the path toward socialism, but we hope they will catch up with us one day.

Departs Japan After 'Nonofficial' Visit

PA1412160895 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Fidel Castro departed for Cuba from the Tokyo International Airport in Narita on 13 December after his nonofficial visit to Japan.

Castro's first visit to Japan began on 12 December and included meetings with various high ranking Japanese officials. He held talks with Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, Chamber of Deputies President Takako Doi, and Hiroshi Mitsozuka, president of the Japanese-Cuban Friendship Parliamentary League.

During Castro's Asian tour, he visited the PRC and SRV sites of cultural, historic, and economic interest and strengthened bonds of friendship and cooperation.

Stops in Vancouver En Route Home

PA1412212695 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Anchorman Luis Alarcon Santana] Commander in chief Fidel Castro this morning arrived in Vancouver, Canada, en route to our country. Ovidio Cabrera filed the following report from that Canadian city for the "National Radio News."

[Cabrera] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro arrived this morning, 14 December, in the city of Vancouver in the Pacific Canadian west coast. This is the second leg of his trip en route to the homeland after the visits to the PRC and the SRV, as well as a stopover in Japan.

The plane 1,062 of Cubana de Aviacion Airlines touched down at the Vancouver International Airport at exactly 0704 local time. Fidel was met on the tarmac by (Raymond Chang), state secretary for Asia and Oceania of the Canadian Federal Government, and Cuban Ambassador to Canada Bienvenido Garcia.

Fidel had departed from Narita International Airport in the city of Tokyo at 1500 local time on Thursday, 14 December. Deputy Keiji Furuja, secretary general of the Japanese-Cuban Parliamentary Friendship League, and Sunichi Sato, director general of the Latin America Department of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, bid him farewell after his stopover in Japan.

During his 44-hour stopover in Japan, the commander in chief held meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, and Chamber of Deputies President Takeko Doi. He also met with members of the Japanese-Cuban Parliamentary Friendship League and members of the Japanese-Cuban Economic Conference. He was interviewed by the most important television networks of the country and gave one news conference.

The apparent inconsistency between the time of departure and time of arrival is explained by the fact Fidel Castro's plane crossed the international date line, which, as everyone knows, divides the Pacific Ocean on Meridian 180. This is the first time that a Cubana de Aviacion Airlines aircraft crosses over the North Pacific. And at the end of this trip, it will be the first time a Cuban aircraft will have gone around the world.

Alarcon: Economic Planning Model To Be Abandoned

PA1412212995 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0235 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 13 Dec (PL) — Planning the national economy in 1996 will not be made "based on the old custom of the five-year plan but adjusted to the existing situation," Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], said today in Havana.

"It will be a plan that will allow us to have a total and overall vision of where we are (Cuba) and our current possibilities and limitations, as well of the outlook for the next year," the ANPP president affirmed.

Alarcon noted that the hope is that the project will function "as a major instrument for the activity of all the leaders of enterprises and national entities."

The ANPP president responded to questions by reporters authorized to work in Havana during a national seminar of the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR), the island's largest mass organization.

When asked about the upcoming and last ANPP's ordinary session for this year, set for 26 and 27 December, he added that, besides the aforementioned economic plan, the Assembly will debate the state budget bill for next year.

Havana's Conventions Palace will receive the deputies, who will attend their 6th period of sessions of the fourth legislature.

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During the first ordinary session of this year, held on 4 and 5 September, the lawmakers approved the foreign investment law, which promotes facilities and guarantees for the arrival of foreign capital in the country.

Haiti

Group To Reveal U.S. Citizens Linked to FRAPH

PA1412222895 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in Creole 1230 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "0730 Appointment" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Felix Ancito, the secretary general of the Anti—Revolutionary Front for the Promotion and Progress of Haiti [Anti-FRAPH], says he is very concerned about the decision of U.S. authorities to remove the names of the Americans who participated in wrongful actions committed in Haiti jointly with FRAPH. Felix Ancito cited the names of 14 American citizens who — according to him — participated in wrongful actions. He says the U.S. authorities were wrong when they decided to remove the names of those citizens from the FRAPH list.

[Begin Ancito recording] Following the latest statement [words indistinct] on the 60,000-page document they confiscated at FRAPH premises, we in the Anti-FRAPH People's Organization for a Better Life are indignant at the last decision of [first name indistinct] (Davis), who says they will remove the names of all U.S. officials from the document and then they will be able to send it to us. Meanwhile, what do they tell them? We tell them that they can send the document with only the names of [word indistinct] Haitians who contributed to a series of dishonest actions that were committed in the country during the three years of coup d'etat.

We say that we have the names of 14 U.S. officials that have already been published, and we say that among those names is Alvin P. Adams, a person well-known in the country because he is a former ambassador to Haiti. There are also some names that we are used to citing. We tell you that we are going to try to give those 14 names to the Justice Commission of the Haitian Senate as early as the beginning of next week.

So, we tell (Gary Navis) that we do not have any problem with him, and we tell the CIA members to get ready, as the organization has already gone into action and is not at all at a theoretical phase. We are not at all at a theoretical phase in which we could conceal what we are doing. We thus say we are going to unveil everything. For the office of the secretary general of the organization, this was Felix Ancito, secretary general. [end recording]

CEP Signs Contracts With European Commission

PA1412145395 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 13 Dec 95

[From "The Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] signed two contracts with the European Commission for the financing of the Haitian elections. The total amount of more than two million crowns will be used to cover expenses associated with the training and of polling station officials, their salaries, as well as the civic education campaign. The first transfer of $1.2 million has already been made. This contribution is within the scope of the $1.3 million financing earmarked for the legislative and municipal elections and within the scope of continuous support provided by the European Union for the consolidation of the democratic process in Haiti.

CEP Begins Sending Electoral Materials to Polls

PA1412162095 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 13 Dec 95

[From "The Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beginning today, electoral materials will be distributed all over the country, according to CEP [Provisional Electoral Council] President Dr. Pierre Michel Sajous. He confirmed that the distribution operation would take place throughout the nine geographic departments of the country beginning today, and would be completed by Saturday, 16 December, on the very eve of the elections. Be aware also that the electoral campaign, now at its height, is scheduled to end on 15 December at midnight. The security of the electoral process is dependent upon the Haitian National Police Force who have already set up a security plan for the whole country.

According to Eric Falt, spokesman for the UN mission in Haiti [UNMIH], all means of security have been set up jointly between the National Police Force and UNMIH to guarantee the holding of these elections and maintainance of public peace all over the country. He called to mind the 25 June elections and the ones that followed them in an unprecedented security climate. Concerning the unfolding of the electoral campaign, the UNMIH spokesman pointed out that so far, everything has unfolded in calm and security except for some minor incidents reported every now and then in some areas. Except for these few isolated incidents, the climate is safe, stable, and favorable for holding the 17 December elections, which will allow a great number of voters to go to the polls, Falt said. As to the question of knowing whether or not a possible upset of the electoral

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process would constitute a failure for the international community, Eric Falt pointed out that these elections concern, first and foremost, the Haitians who have a duty to support the continuing efforts toward the restoration of democracy in their country.

CEP Officials on Hostility Toward Elections, Security

PA1412220895 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] President Pierre Michel Sajous stated yesterday that he had noted statements by ill-intentioned individuals who try, according to him, to arouse the population by announcing the catastrophes in store for polling day on some radio stations in the capital. We have been informed that some sectors hostile to the holding of these elections are working to make the process fail, Sajous pointed out, adding that within the scope of democracy the rights of all must be respected. He formally guaranteed that Sunday's ballot will unfold in peace and in the utmost quiet, adding that the CEP does not have any information on possible acts of violence during the electoral period.

Attorney Leon Manus, vice president of the CEP, was of the same opinion. He said for his part that the moment has come for the Haitians who suffered for the establishment of democracy once again to have the chance to go to the polls.

Furthermore, Mr. Sajous warned that only the Haitian National Police Force and the UN Mission in Haiti are in charge of security throughout the country during the whole electoral process. He explained that even the other existing legal security authorities are not authorized to guarantee the security of the upcoming ballot. On the basis of information he says he has, Pierre Michel Sajous has asserted that unidentified armed individuals have allegedly offered protection to the members of the polling stations at the moment of electoral operations. [passage omitted]

UN Official: Mission Cannot Guarantee Total Security

PA1412224095 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Voters will be able to vote with complete peace of mind next 17 December, General Joseph Kinzer, commander of the military component of the UN Mission in Haiti [UNMIH], has said. Nevertheless, General Kinzer explained that UNMIH soldiers will not be able to guarantee the security of the voters 100 percent. He has, however, announced the setting up of a quick intervention force on polling day for very high risk areas. Nearly 6,000 UNMIH soldiers will be deployed throughout the country.

The bulk of the work will be done by the Haitian police because, according to Gen. Kinzer, the elections are Haitian elections but not UN elections. [passage omitted]

UNMIH military commander Gen. Joseph Kinzer also warned that the UNMIH elements would react in accordance with the evolution of the situation. [passage omitted]

CEP: Only UNMIH, Police To Carry Arms During Elections

PA1412145495 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 13 Dec 95

[From "The Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] President Pierre Michel Sajous announced today that only the UN mission in Haiti [UNMIH] and the National Police will be authorized to ensure security before, during, and after the elections. Pierre Michel Sajous says that nobody — whether he or she is an official or not — will have the right to carry or use weapons to do anything, whether they be firearms or any other kind of weapon. They will not be allowed to use them. Only national policemen and UNMIH members will provide security throughout the election period. He reiterated that no one — whether he or she is a government official or not — has the right to ensure security or to pretend to ensure security before, during, or after the elections.

Unidentified Gunmen Fire Shots at City Hall 11 Dec

PA1412145595 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 12 Dec 95

[From "The Midday Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It should be be brought to your attention that last night Port-au-Prince City Hall was the target of gunfire. Unidentified persons fired shots at the Port-au-Prince Communal Administration building. This incident happened at about 1030 last night. It is not known if Mayor Emmanuel was at his office during the incident. This is the second incident of its kind within the past three weeks.

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President To Step Up Public Investments

PA1412212795 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 7 Dec 95 p 22

[Report by Manuel Moreno Dominguez]

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to the demand to establish an emergency financial program to launch national economic reactivation, President Ernesto Zedillo asserts that domestic and foreign investment pledges amounting to $12.5 billion for 1996 and his administration's plan to invest 1.2 billion new pesos for the completion of projects, are among the foundations of the country's economic recovery.

Zedillo forcefully said that "with the steadfast work of all the sectors, in all the regions, with a clear program of adjustments and unity of goals, we have been able to overcome the causes of the crisis."

At the closing of the 18th Civil Engineers National Congress, Zedillo confirmed his intention to contribute to economic recovery by using most of the physical investment [inversion fisica] budget during the early months of the year.

He went further: he reiterated his determination to enforce the judicial system strictly by the law, not using political criteria or unfounded and unjustifiable pressures.

Addressing civil engineers in the "Adolfo Lopez Mateos" presidential room, Zedillo explained that if the expense budget is approved by the Chamber of Deputies, public investment will begin to show real growth next year and he outlined the following:

The communications and transportation sector, the National Water Commission, the electrical sector's organizations, the Education Secretariat, and the health sector will invest 29.5 billion new pesos; Pemex [Mexican Petroleum] will allot almost 23.9 billion new pesos for physical investments in exploration, production, refining, gas, and basic petrochemistry, and as for regional development, over seven billion new pesos will be allotted to the Municipal Social Development Fund and almost 1.9 billion [currency not specified] will be allotted to projects aimed at generating productive jobs.

Zedillo pointed out that the secretariats of finance, comptroller general, and commerce issued a circular to step up the reactivation of public investment. The message instructs the heads of all federal offices and institutions to publish the schedule of summons for bids on leading public works projects by 31 January at the latest.

He added that these institutions are being instructed to allow the minimum legal time between the publication of the summons for bidding and the opening of supplier propositions.

After presenting the National Civil Engineering Award to Jose Luis Sanchez Bribiesca and receiving the commemorative medal and Congress' report, the president said that one of the sectors that will undergo an upsurge next year is the construction sector, thus his determination to invest, through Banobras [National Bank of Public Works and Services, Corp.] 1.2 billion new pesos to complete 1,700 projects in various municipalities throughout the country.

Zedillo, who was accompanied by Communications Secretary Carlos Ruiz Sacristan, Education Secretary Miguel Limon Rojas; Comptroller General Secretary Norma Samaniego, and other officials, pointed out that another measure that will contribute to the reactivation is the more than 60 percent reduction of cargo and passenger tariffs on 28 toll-paying freeways, which will go into effect on 15 December.

The president also pointed out that even in the midst of economic difficulties, national and regional actions have been initiated to ease the social effects of the crisis: We have continued to strengthen the state of law, we are establishing the supremacy of the law, and we are making progress in the struggle against corruption and impunity.

Regard for 1994 Election Honesty Found Down

96CA0070A Mexico City VOZ Y VOTO in Spanish Nov 95 No 33, pp 33-36

[FBIS Translated Text] This time the VOZ Y VOTO poll was designed to ascertain what the population of the Federal District (DF) knows about, what impression it has of, and what it expects from political and electoral reform. Designing the poll was no easy task, inasmuch as a series of group sessions conducted previously revealed that the topic was foreign to citizens and that if it was not explored with due care, there was a risk of inducing responses that do not represent public opinion. The decision was thus made to conduct the poll in three sections. The first sought to ascertain to what extent the population perceives that there have been gains or continuing problems in electoral matters. The second was designed to elicit a spontaneous list of issues that citizens feel should be addressed in order to make our elections more honest. The third delved into matters that are specifically those of political and electoral reform.

The first question (Table 1) was phrased thus: "Are the elections being held at present in our country more honest or less honest than they used to be in previous years, or are they the same?" As we can see, 31

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percent do acknowledge an improvement, but the rest of the population believes that there is still fraud. The perception of an improvement rests on the following factors: "Greater turnout; clearer/more credible results; more competition between parties; observers; certification with photographs and computers; and more radio and TV coverage."

"Are the elections being held at present in our country more honest or less honest than they used to be in previous years, or are they the same?"

Table 1.

Response	Percent
More honest	**31**
Why?	**Percent**
Greater turnout	8
Clearer/more credible results	8
More competition between parties	4
Presence of observers	3
Credential with photograph	3
More respect for vote	1
Promises kept	1
Computers	1
More radio and TV coverage	1
Others	1
Total	31
The same	**19**
Why?	**Percent**
Electoral fraud	18
PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] always wins	15
No changes	8
Promises not kept	2
Small turnout	1
Best one wins	1
No reporting of results	1
No monitoring of vote	1
People not taken into account	1
No reason cited	1
Total	50
Less honest	**19**
Why?	**Percent**
Government imposes the party it wants on us	9
Vote-buying/corruption	3
Citizens not taken into account	2
Votes of nonvoters went to PRI	1
PRI always wins	1
Promises not kept	1
No reason cited	1
Total	19

"Last year we had presidential elections. Were those elections honest?"

Table 2.

Response	Percent
Yes	**33**
Why?	**Percent**
PRI did win	8
Widely monitored	5
Quick count and the observers	4
PRI was the best choice	3
Greater turnout	3
Credential with photograph	2
Mass media say so	2
Computers	1
Vote counters were reliable	1
Voted for Zedillo out of fear of a war	1
Legal/I was at polling booth	1
No reason cited	2
Total	33
No	**60**
Why?	**Percent**

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Response	Percent
There was fraud	22
PRI always wins	7
Political problems clouded elections	7
Zedillo was not very well known	6
Opposition was much stronger than PRI	4
Voters threatened into voting for PRI	3
Mistakes in vote count	2
Votes/ballot boxes stolen	2
Mass media backed PRI	1
Problems with special polling booths	1
No reason cited	5
Total	60

In September of last year, after the presidential elections, VOZ Y VOTO conducted a nationwide poll in which it asked citizens for their impression of the just completed elections. The question was posed directly: "Was there or was there not fraud?" Most citizens (64 percent) said there was not. At present, this conviction, as we can see from Table 3, has faded; now only 33 percent say those elections were honest.

Table 3. Presidential Elections of 1994

September 1994: Was there or was there not fraud?	
Response	**Percent**
Yes	31
No	64
No response	5
October 1995: Were they honest?	
Yes	33
No	60
No response	7

How do those who now say that last year's elections were not honest explain their perception? Most say "fraud" without explaining what the fraud consisted of. Other reasons are: "PRI always wins; political problems clouded the elections; Zedillo was not very well known; the opposition was much stronger than PRI; voters were threatened into voting for PRI; there were errors in the vote count; theft of ballot boxes; the mass media supported PRI, and problems with the special polling booths." Another five percent who said that the elections were not honest did not explain on what they base their view (Table 2).

Those who still maintain that last year's elections were honest base their view on practically the same arguments advanced to support the view that there has been progress in electoral matters.

The findings above can be interpreted in different ways. To the pollsters they reflect two phenomena that dominate the current social psychology in our country. One is the disgruntlement of the population amid the economic crisis that we are experiencing. This disgruntlement colors everything; no matter what the topic, it always comes up. In this case, so great is the anxiety, frustration, and anger over economic conditions that people tend to deny what they had previously acknowledged as democratic progress and even to forget how they voted in past elections. The second phenomenon is the misinformation produced by the avalanche of bad news that hits the population. Under such conditions, the only news items that tend to stick in citizens' minds are the ones that carry an emotional impact and reinforce the anger that they feel.

The findings presented in Table 4 support these assertions. The question posed to DF residents was: "What is needed to have honest elections in our country?" The aim was to elicit spontaneous statements about a civic agenda for political/electoral reform. The first thing that strikes one is the many remarks rejecting the government and our political system in general. The talk is of "changing the government; corruption; removing PRI from power; help for the people, etc."

The citizens who limited themselves to answering the question proper mentioned the following issues: "A greater awareness among citizens (this argument was by far the most common); more political education and guidance; monitoring of elections; reliable people doing the count; parties ought to keep their promises; the IFE [Federal Electoral Institute] should be run by the people, not the government; more coverage of the results; stronger parties; more justice for all parties."

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Table 4. "What is needed to have honest elections in our country?"

Response	Percent
Greater awareness among citizens	18
Change of government	7
More political education and guidance	7
No corruption	6
Honest government	6
IFE respect for the vote	5
See to it that vote is respected/ monitoring	5
Have reliable people do count	4
Remove PRI from power	3
The system/change the process	3
Parties that keep their word	3
Better candidates	3
Help for the people	2
IFE run by the people, not the government	2
Support from other political parties	1
PRI should no longer be involved	1
Know origin of the candidates	1
True democracy	1
Demand better reporting of results	1
Stronger parties	1
More justice for all parties	1
Separate government and PRI	1
Change electoral laws	1
Better electoral organization	1
Others	1
Nothing/fine as is	1
No response	11
Total	100

Table 5. "What have you heard about political/electoral reform?"

Response	Percent
Nothing/don't know anything	84
Know something	16
What do you know about it?	
Goal is honest elections	4
IFE will be independent	2
Reform of Electoral Code	1
More communication between parties and government	1
Voter rolls to be cleaned up	1
There will be democracy	1
Ruling party to be removed from power	1
Population ought to vote	1
Votes will be counted by computer	1
Observers	1
New voter card to be created	1
Debate among parties	1
Total	100

In the political sphere the talk turned to political/ electoral reform. What does the citizenry know about this? The question that introduces Table 5 was phrased to find out. The findings show that 84 percent of DF residents replied that they had heard nothing or knew nothing about this. If we look at the responses of those who said that they did know something, we find that many of them are irrelevant. Thus, the lack of familiarity with the topic, as it has been discussed in the political arena, could well be around 90 percent.

Finally, we wanted to ascertain how much importance citizens might attach to political/electoral reform. To this end, before posing the question we gave the following simplified explanation (this was a telephone poll, remember) of the concept: "Political/electoral reform consists of changes in our laws to guarantee honest elections in our country." The findings that emerge from this question can be seen in Table 6. After "guaranteeing honest elections" was mentioned, 89 percent of the respondents said that reform was important and, in support of their stand, cited a series of reasons that above

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all else reflect expectations. They again include remarks critical of the government and the system.

"How important is political/electoral reform to our country?" (This question was preceded by the following explanation: "Political/electoral reform consists of proposing changes in our laws to guarantee honest elections in our country.")

Table 6.

Response	Percent
Very important	89
Somewhat important	6
Not all important	5
Why is it very important?	
The results would be more credible	19
Corruption/fraud would end	11
Changes would take place	6
The vote would be respected	6
We would have a better government	6
We would have a better country	6
There would be democracy	5
Everyone would benefit	3
There would be greater confidence in future elections	2
It would create an awareness about voting	2
PRI would stop winning	1
Hand-picking/imposing of candidates would stop	1
Commitment to government	1
There would be popular elections	1
We would solve many problems	1
Confidence would be restored	1
Our international image would improve	1
We would be taken into account	1
There would be greater respect for opposition parties	1
There would be honest politicians	1
No response	13
Total	89

In summary, the most noteworthy findings of the poll are the following:

Many citizens have already forgotten about the progress toward honest elections that they acknowledged last year after the presidential elections.

Today, most of the population still thinks that the elections in our country are not honest.

One-third of DF residents do acknowledge that there has been progress toward honest elections.

The priority issues on the spontaneous citizen agenda for political/electoral reform are: Raising the awareness of citizens and political education and guidance.

About 90 percent of DF residents say that they have heard nothing or know nothing about political/electoral reform, the central issue of national political life.

If the point of political/electoral reform is to guarantee honest elections, then 89 percent of the citizens feel that it is very important. Two thoughts come to mind after one reads these findings. One has to do with how detached politicians are from citizens. While the former are immersed in their own debate, the latter are worried primarily about surviving the economic crisis. The other has to do with the need (already posed as a civic demand) for a mass media policy that enhances the awareness and education of the population in political/electoral matters.

Methodological Note

The poll was conducted on 16 and 17 October of this year by Covarrubias and Associates, S.C. (general manager: Ana Cristina Covarrubias; sample design and field coordination: Adrian Villegas; information processing: Sergio Garcia). It was a telephone poll among 400 names selected randomly from the white pages of the Mexico City phone directory.

Poll Universe. It was defined as "citizens 18 years of age and older living in homes with a telephone listed in the white pages of the Mexico City phone directory."

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Size of the Sample and Sample Method. A total of 418 interviews were conducted in 16 administrative divisions and 7 [Mexico City] metropolitan area municipalities in the State of Mexico. The margin of error for the sample size is plus or minus 4.9 percent for a proportional value [as published] of 50 percent, with a confidence interval of 95 percent. The sample method was random systematic.

Information Gathering. A single interview per home was conducted; the workday was from 10 in the morning to 10 at night so that people with jobs could be incorporated into the sample. The unweighted sample broke down as follows:

Age	Percent	Socioeconomic Level	Percent	Sex	Percent
18-25	28	A/B	7	Female	51
26-35	29	C	14	Male	49
36-45	20	D	42		
46+	23	E/F	37		

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Nicaragua

Ministry Issues Communique on Students' Riot

PA1412214295 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Government Ministry informs Nicaraguan citizens that due to the events which occurred today in the vicinity of the National Assembly, the police, as guarantors of public order and the security of the citizens, were guarding the installations in which the deputies were assembled to discuss the 1996 national budget. Enraged protesters broke the law and attacked the police with rocks, stones, and mortars, forcing the police to take the standard course of action dispersing the protesters with teargas grenades. As a results of these unfortunate events, 43 persons were injured — including policemen, protesters, and passersby — and one person was killed. The Government Ministry expresses its concern at such unfortunate acts in which persons not belonging to the university community led and participated in the violent acts.

The Government Ministry also reports that tomorrow an investigating commission will be established. The Ministry has called for restraint and a civic attitude of respect for the current laws and the rights of the citizenry.

Managua, 13 December, 1995.

Ministry of the Government

Minister, Police Director View Clashes With Students

PA1412223395 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1619 GMT 14 Dec 95

[News conference by Sergio Narvaez and National Police Director Commander Fernando Caldera with unidentified reporters at the Government Ministry in Managua on 14 December — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Narvaez] The regrettable student demonstration on 13 December started when acts of violence were perpetrated against members of the National Police who were guaranteeing order and protecting the National Assembly and Presidential House and the people who were in them. Unfortunately, the demonstration, which may have been started by individuals foreign to the student movement, was definitely aggressive against the National Police, whose duty it is to maintain order.

These incidents led to various situations, and now a commission is being appointed to conduct an investigation. The commission will be formed by Mr. Lino Avendano from the civil inspector's office at the Government Ministry; Dr. Maria del Carmen Solorzano from the Office of the Attorney General; and Commander [name indistinct], director of internal affairs at the National Police. It will also be formed by members of the National Council of Universities, who will be appointed at a later date.

It is important to note that the National Police has always acted with moderation, especially toward the student movement. This has been the case over the past few days, when we used good sense and dialogue to prevent aggression such as, for example, during the incident at the national airport.

It is regrettable that a person was killed, and that is why this commission must investigate the incident as soon as possible. There was no order, I repeat no order to use firearms against the demonstrators.

If you have any questions I will answer them. I also wanted to explain to certain reporters that no statements were made yesterday because this was agreed upon with the rectors of the National Council of Universities.

[Caldera] Please name the media.

[Reporter] [words indistinct]

[Caldera] I reiterate the statement that (?the minister) just made to the effect that orders to fire had not been given and that, as a preventive measure by the National Police, most of the policemen yesterday were unarmed. That is clear from the videos aired by the various television stations. The National Police adopted a preventive measure. Some agents were armed for security reasons, because sometimes the police are fired at. Given the situation, other policemen, who came as reinforcements, were also armed.

Thus, the National Police made extraordinary efforts to avoid deploying armed policemen. I wish to say that we profoundly regret yesterday's incident. The National Police took a blow; it is in mourning. We were hurt by yesterday's incident and regret it very much.

After an initial assessment of the developments, we can say that yesterday the police [word indistinct] was attacked. This is the truth. The security cordon was broken [words indistinct] the atmosphere was highly tense. The policemen were tired and sunburned. They were ill-equipped to face a riot. They were heavily stressed out and tense, and thus, they fired. That is what happened. They made a personal decision. This was never a policy of the institution. It has never been and never will be.

This is a new police. A police born of special historical conditions in Nicaragua; it has certain values and principles regardless of what could be said about it for

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political reasons or interests. Politicians have a right to speak out. This police, however, is profoundly humanitarian. Nevertheless, this does not prevent members of our institution — for personal reasons, due to stress and tension or difficulties — from acting in this manner. The institution denies responsibility for this. We support and will give all our cooperation to the commission that the Government Ministry is creating, and we are completely open to any kind of investigation.

We are not at all afraid, because this was not a policy of the institution; it is not a policy of the police to fire recklessly. It never was and never will be its policy. You can rest absolutely assured that this is our conviction. This is why we feel profoundly affected by yesterday's development.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] of the Radio News newscast. Where did the bullets come from [words indistinct] I understand that the students involved in the hunger strike were evicted and that this ignited yesterday's incident [words indistinct] and to ensure that the truth prevails.

[Caldera] I did not say that all policemen were unarmed. I said that an extraordinary effort was made to not arm them; that 90 percent of the policemen were unarmed, and this can be corroborated through the videos aired on the various television stations. I said that there were armed policemen; that policemen did fire their arms. I am not denying this. Please, let us make an effort to be objective, because this is a very serious and delicate matter about which one must speak objectively. What was the other question?

[Reporter] The cause of the incident.

[Caldera] The students were there in the morning and nothing had happened. At about 1100, a large student group arrived with the intention of breaking the security cordon established around the National Assembly. They attacked the police violently with rocks and [word indistinct]. They threw a mortar at Captain Erwin Romero, who was later hospitalized. The mortar hit him in the back. The first police injuries were produced. This worsened the situation and the policemen opened fire.

There is no justification for attacking the police when they are trying to restore order and to establish a security zone. There is no justification. The fact that several persons involved in the hunger strike were removed the previous day did not justify the attack. There is no justification for the police to fire at the students either. There is no justification. Daniel Trota of REUTER.

[Trota] What evidence is there that the students were armed. [words indistinct]?

[Caldera] This was a first. In the past, it was the police that was fired at. That was not the case here. This was the first time that the police fired at a demonstration of this nature. In the past we were the ones being killed. I want to mention another example. The police did not fire during the incident at Masaya Stadium. This was the most recent incident of its kind. You also mentioned the Los Parrales incident in which a police officer died.

As I said, this was a first during demonstrations, and thus, not a frequent police action. In the Masaya incident, the media recognized the efforts that the police made despite the high degree of exasperation that prevailed.

I think that legal and not disciplinary measures are called for, because a crime is involved here. This does not call for a reprimand or disciplinary action. This is why the Government Ministry created a commission. This calls for legal and not disciplinary actions. Criminal responsibility will be determined. I wish to reaffirm that lack of equipment is the main problem facing the National Police's riot squad. I said this after the Masaya developments during a news conference attended by many of you. We are worried about this, because lack of equipment is a key factor.

Equipment defines the psychological attitude of a policeman. There is one psychological attitude when a policeman feels well-equipped and protected and has sufficient elements to fulfill his mission. There is another psychological attitude when a policeman, who is not well-equipped faces a large demonstration. The latter applies to yesterday's incident. I am not justifying it; I am just giving an explanation.

[Reporter] Where there any armed students?

[Caldera] In that regard, the only information is that one of the kidnapped policemen said that a rifle was pointed at his chest, that the students told him that a security guard did that to him. As for the policeman's weapon, it was taken away by the students. This is what I have been able to determine so far. Isabel Romero of LA TRIBUNA.

[Romero] [Words indistinct]

[Caldera] As for the incident at UCA [Central American University], members of the university community approved the results.

The report they signed is there. It explains how everything happened, the results, each person's responsibility. We only have one Investigations and Internal Affairs Office. We have one person who is as honorable as can be, a reputable person — Commander Ana Julia Guido — and we have (?no reason) to replace her.

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Where is the factor of balance in the investigation? It is useless; no one uses it. Furthermore, the Office of the Attorney General and Government Ministry are participating. You might say that the police have an interest in this, but it is important for the university community to participate. They are the ones who established the idea that this commission must act by consensus. I do not believe the problem is the [word indistinct]. If they are going to participate in this investigation, I see no problem. The balance factor is the university community's participation. Maritza Vargas of Radio Nicaragua... [pauses] with regard to the other question, it was a very difficult and confusing situation in which the police were being attacked, in which there was the added pressure of preventing the situation from extending into the night. It was not possible for all the sides to coordinate and establish mediation in a timely manner, because it was rather late when the university authorities started talking with the government authorities. All of these factors played a part. Maritza Vargas of Radio Nicaragua.

[Vargas] Commander, [words indistinct] shots were fired yesterday during the demonstration. The [word indistinct] could not be avoided, because the person that was shot died several hours later, and shots could be heard throughout. (?Perhaps) this could have been avoided with an order from a chief, from one of you, or — I don't know — a direct order to cease fire. Another thing; why was so much tear gas used? There were places where parents and children were frightened [words indistinct] an excess of tear gas. The residents were quite frightenened. My other question is how can you prevent decisions like these by the police? How can the people feel confident when they want to stage protests?

[Caldera] First, the use of tear gas is part of police procedures. They use the amount of tear gas that the policeman in charge in the field estimate is necessary. This is not regulated in any international convention. The use of tear gas is based on the discretion of the policeman in the field, and I believe that in the end, tear gas is better than shots. In some areas, there may have been an excess of tear gas due to the wind. I am not sure of this; I do not know if a detailed study has been conducted on the issue of the gases. I am more concerned about the shots. We are going to implement stronger measures than those implemented in this case with regard to firearms. We are alarmed and concerned about this. We are going to implement stronger measures than those implemented in this case. It is our duty to implement control measures. That is our responsibility. I am fully aware of that. Eduardo Estrella of (?Cosmovision).

[Estrella] For Mr. Narvaez, the central government's representative. Why is it that it is not until someone is killed or dozens of people are injured that the government seeks to resolve conflicts?

[Narvaez] I believe this 6-percent issue is a very complex problem, and three sides are involved in it: the executive, the National Assembly, and the university community. It is truly regrettable that incidents like these must happen before talks are held. I must tell you, however, that talks were initiated a while back; from the time of the constitutional reform debates. I believe negotiations are beginning today, and the sides will seriously try to solve the 6-percent problem.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Caldera] On this occasion, I would like to appeal to the student leaders, because I know that emotions are stirred up. However, we should be very careful because, as this reporter was saying, there are individuals who are alien to the student movement and alien to the 6-percent campaign. We simply have information confirming that Donald Mendoza was involved, as well as people from the Parrales Vallejos Cooperative. This was even reported in the news media. We have to be very careful to prevent this situation from getting worse. We know that National Police agents are largely responsible for what happened. We are convinced of this. They are very largely responsible. As an institution, the Police agrees with us. Nevertheless, I want to urge everyone to exercise soundness of mind and reflect. We should look for negotiated solutions in Nicaragua. I believe that all of those present here have the responsibility of contributing to prevent matters from being resolved in this fashion. We are all involved in this, in searching. A few days before these events, the police had exercised extraordinary caution. You have evidence of this, for instance, during the protests at the Mifin [Ministry of Finance], the Ministry of Eduation, and at the airport. Now the problem became unavoidable when the student demonstration clashed with police on the sidewalks. It was unavoidable. The only thing left was to step aside so that they could enter into the assembly and tear it down. It was the only thing left to be done. However, there are chiefs and leaders of state, but also from all of the sectors involved who have the responsibility of preventing this from happening. Therefore, we have to prevent this. Everybody should have a moderate attitude and behavior. We have to prevent these actions. We should avoid jeopardizing people's lives and state and private property. Private automobiles, which were not state property, were destroyed. All of us are responsible for making an effort and seeking a way to help prevent the unnecessary use of violence. All of us have suffered the effects of violence in Nicaragua during the past 10

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or 15 years. We should even be careful and responsible with regard to how information is broadcast. We win nothing from inciting Nicaraguans to kill one another. We win nothing from inciting violence in Nicaragua. One thing that the Nicaraguan people do not want is violence. Nicaraguan people want to solve matters in peace. We all have a degree of responsibility, because those of us who know how students react have the responsibility to contribute with moderation. I was recalling last year's 6-percent campaign and the way it was conducted then by student leaders. There was a large demonstration in front of the National Assembly and Presidency under the control of student leaders, including some action. I wanted to point this out so that all of us can contribute. Rosemary Torton, TV Noticias.

[Torton] [Words indistinct] That is to say, what is the responsibility of those individuals who incited the confrontation [words indistinct]?

[Caldera] I believe that the current investigation should help determine if criminal charges can be made according to the law against these student leaders or other individuals who acted violently against the police. I believe that it is important to urge citizens in general, particularly the student movement, to deal with this very delicate matter with soundness of mind. I urge the news media to deal with this matter with great sensibility. I believe that the talks that will begin today... [pauses] and let us hope a favorable resolution is reached for all sides so that this does not happen again. Another point is that it is time to prevent the Nicaraguan people from suffering — as they always have — the consequences of these demonstrations. Somehow we should avoid aggressive actions, the use of homemade mortars against individuals. This is a very aggressive action. We should do away with the practice of throwing mortars as if they were fireworks on the eve of the Day of the Immaculate Conception. Mortars are being thrown at police agents whose only mission is to maintain order.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Caldera] That is why we are going to investigate. Thanks to all the videos that reporters have recorded, we have pictures and we will make identifications.

[Reporter] Commander, if the investigating commission finds [words indistinct] are absolutely responsible, will you be willing to resign?

[Caldera] I will not resign. [words indistinct] I was appointed for a term, which I will complete. If there are grounds for my dismissal, [words indistinct], but I will not resign.

[Reporter] Commander [words indistinct] unable to face the students [words indistinct] to face the demonstration. Were there special brigades or were other forces involved? That is one question. The other one is: The taxi driver whose car was burned blamed the National Police. What is your version of this incident?

[Caldera] Three different police forces were there. Security personnel from the Presidency, Managua patrolmen, and members of the Riot Brigade [Brigada Anti-Disturbios]. The best trained personnel for this type of situation are the members of the Riot Brigade. Logically, the others are not. They have been trained and are prepared, but we lack the necessary equipment [words indistinct].

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Brazil

Deputy Notes U.S. Lawsuit Against Sivam Contracor

PY1412234395 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 12 Dec 95 p 5

[Article by Denise Rothenburg]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia — The super committee that has been investigating the Sivam [Amazon Region Surveillance System] case listened on 12 December to one more accusation against the U.S. Raytheon company. Deputy Fernando Gabeira (Green Party-Rio de Janeiro) has found out that in March 1990, the U.S. company was found guilty by a U.S. State of Virginia court for having illegally obtained U.S. Air Force secret documents. According to information obtained by Deputy Gabeira, Raytheon was fined $1 million.

Gabeira asked: If a company illegally obtains material from the U.S. Air Force, why wouldn't it obtain papers from the Brazilian Air Force? In addition, if Raytheon representative Jose Affonso Assumpcao was such a close friend of the Brazilian ambassador to Washington, who can assure that the embassy did not hide from the Brazilian Government obscure facts involving the enterprise?

Gabeira said that he discovered "Raytheon's occult story" and that the company had been fined when he was using Internet services and accessed an article that had been published by the Inter Press Service (IPS). IPS is an international agency headquartered in Italy. Now, Gabeira is in contact with U.S. environmental organizations in an attempt to obtain a copy of the lawsuit filed against Raytheon. The company's story that has been published by IPS via Internet views three other incidents related to overpricing of contracts that have been signed with the U.S. Government.

In October 1993, Raytheon paid $3.7 million in fines to the U.S. Government for having increased the price of the Patriot missiles. One year before that, Raytheon had to pay another $2.75 million fine for having overpriced equipment for missile testing. In October 1994, the fine Raytheon had to pay totalled $4 million and referred to overpricing of radars sold to the U.S. Government.

In the Brazilian case, in addition to the problem of the Sivam radars that Senator Gilberto Miranda (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party-Amazonas) has denounced — Westinghouse has allegedly offered radars that are cheaper than those adopted in the project — other senators found out that the documents Raytheon presented to the Brazilian Government indicate that the enterprise's cost for each one of the 940 computers contemplated in the project — model 486 with 33 mHz of speed — was $3,500, while in Brazil the same computers do not cost more than $2,500 each. The second problem is that these computers are already deemed old-fashioned. Senator Geraldo Mello (Brazilian Social Democracy Party-Rio Grande do Norte), who is deputy rapporteur of the super committee that is investigating Sivam, said that he would never purchase a 486 computer with 33 mHz for his own use:

"The one I have at home has 66 mHz. It is faster," he said.

Rumors on Minister's Dismissal Affect Market

PY1412201495 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 1909 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sao Paulo, 14 Dec (AE) — The financial market was shaken this afternoon with rumors that Finance Minister Pedro Malan and Central Bank Director Gustavo Loyola have allegedly been dismissed. The Sao Paulo Stock Exchange Index (Ibovespa) dropped by 5.35 points but it recently recovered to a negative 4.26 points. Advisers of minister Malan, Loyola, and even of Planning Minister Jose Serra denied any dismissal.

Minister Malan's adviser, Luis Carlos Cabral, categorically denied any changes in the economic team and he reported that Malan's trip to Belem, Para, tomorrow is confirmed. He will give a lecture at the local commercial association. After the lecture Malan will meet with Para Governor Almir Gabriel (PSDB) [Brazilian Social Democracy Party]. Malan's adviser also denied that Malan would travel to Sao Paulo today to discuss the Banespa [Sao Paulo State Bank] case.

The Central Bank board of directors reported through advisers that the reports on Loyola's dismissal are simple rumors. They said that Loyola's agenda continues unchanged for the upcoming days.

The commentaries on Malan's possible dismissal began early this afternoon. The rumor in the financial market was that Serra would take his post. Serra considers such possibility "total absurdness." Such was the statement he made in Rio de Janeiro from where he is about to depart for Madrid. Serra will represent the Brazilian Government at the ceremony during which the cooperation agreement between Mercosur [Common Market of the South] and the EU will be signed.

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Senator Views Central Bank, Economico 'Connivance'

PY1512015595 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 14 Dec 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brasilia — Senator Antonio Carlos Magalhaes (Liberal Front Party-Bahia) has decided to rub salt in the wound of the Central Bank [BC]. In a document delivered to Attorney General Geraldo Brindeiro, Magalhaes poses 10 disturbing questions to the Central Bank about the period of time prior to the intervention of the Economico Bank. Through these questions, Magalhaes intends to prove the Central Bank's connivance in the Economico Bank's irregularities since last year.

"I asked the questions in order to obtain the information immediately. The BC answers will reveal the irregularities. Once I have the answers I will adopt several measures," Magalhaes told JORNAL DO BRASIL. He clearly stated that one of the alleged irregularities is the "doctored bank balance" approved by the Central Bank, "thus deceiving the Economico Bank clients and minority shareholders."

In one of the several conversations he held with journalists yesterday, Magalhaes said: "It will hurt them more than calling them criminals."

By referring to episodes that took place in 1994, the four-page document with 10 rather technical and precise questions (including dates and details of operations) could put Finance Minister Pedro Malan, who was BC president at the time, in a delicate situation. [passage omitted]

PFL Deputies Try To 'Retaliate' Against Government

PY1512021695 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 14 Dec 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia — The Liberal Front Party, PFL, is using the voting agenda of the Chamber of Deputies to retaliate against the administration, which did not make an attempt to defend the PFL members who are mentioned in the pink file. This offensive is being headed by Chamber of Deputies President Luis Eduardo Magalhaes (PFL-BA) [Bahia], who included in the day's voting list bills that go against the interests of the administration.

The first damage was incurred last night when the Chamber of Deputies approved, during a symbolic voting session, a bill presented by Deputy Nilson Gibson (PMN-PE) [National Mobilization Party-Pernambuco], which increases from 600 reals [R] to R1,300 the minimum wage for medical doctors and oral surgeons. The result will be an immediate increase of expenses for the federal administration.

"Didn't the administration throw the pink file in our face? We are returning it. Here is a pink file for it. Let President Fernando Henrique Cardoso veto it," said an eminent PFL congressman. "Everyone should know: Without the PFL there are no reforms. Furthermore: Without the PFL there is no governability," said Deputy Inocencio Oliveira (PE), PFL leader in the lower house.

Roundup of Economic Reports Through 13 Dec

PY1412191595

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic activities in Brazil monitored through 13 December.

Basic Leading Indicators

Fuel Consumption Increases — Compared to October, the Economic Operations Index, Imec, ended the month of November with a 1.87-percent increase. Nearly all the items on the index registered a positive variation. Fuel alcohol and gasoline consumption increased by 7.12 percent, and diesel oil consumption by 6.74 percent, while electricity consumption increased by 1.72 percent. (Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 8 Dec 95 p B7)

Electronic Sales Figures — Electro-electronic industries grew 15 percent this year; their sales totalled $28.2 billion, despite adverse foreign competition, high interest rates, and restrictions on credit. Competitive imports increased by 35 percent this year to $8 billion, while exports increased only 5 percent to $2.7 billion. Sales abroad represented only 9.6 percent of the area sales and 10.6 percent of the overall Brazilian exports. Some 175,000 people are employed in this sector, but the pursuit of competitivity reduced the number of jobs by 3.3 percent. Home appliance sales increased by 10 percent to $9.6 billion. Informatics sales grew by 21.5 percent to $6.4 billion. Industrial equipment sales grew by 19.7 percent to $5.4 billion, electric and electronic components sales grew by 16.8 percent to $1.7 billion, and telecommunications grew 16.2 percent to $2.4 billion. (Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 9 Dec 95 p B11)

Fiscal, Monetary Issues

State Debts, Credits Viewed — The federal government has increased by as much 25 percent the volume of resources to be lent to state governments that are in a bad financial situation in order to help them pay their debts. The governors of the most indebted states can use as much as 5 percent of their revenue to pay for these

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loans. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has agreed to a six-month period of grace for the state governments that are granted these loans. In exchange, he has been promised that the Federal Senate will not modify the resolution that forces governors to allocate 11 percent of their revenue to the payment of their debts with the federal government. Two other credit lines — a program to readjust personnel and another to refinance Budget Revenue Advances — can be paid off over 36 months. (Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 11 Dec 95 p A4)

Trade Issues

Multinational Car Paint Venture Begins — The Renner Tintas company, the largest supplier of car paint in Brazil which has 55 percent of this market, reported on 11 December that it has formed a joint venture with multinational DuPont to sell throughout South America. The new company's name is Renner DuPont Tintas Automotivas e Industriais S.A. and it will have four plants: Two in Brazil — in Guarulhos and Sao Bernardo, in Sao Paulo State; a third in Buenos Aires, Argentina; and a fourth in Valencia, Venezuela. The Renner/DuPont company will have 1,500 employees. (Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2002 GMT 11 Dec 95)

Import Tax Remains Stable — The government will not modify the import tax rate and has negotiated with the other countries that make up the Common Market of the South — Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay — a postponement, until 11 and 12 January, discussions on increased beef import taxes and a reduction in wheat import taxes. (Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2227 GMT 12 Dec 95)

Colombia

Reaction to Accusations Committee Ruling, 'Narco-Rider'

Prosecutor To Continue Case 8000 Probe

PA1412203995 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 0328 GMT 13 Dec 95

[Report by Marta Elizabeth Camargo]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Camargo] Here is the latest scoop. Tonight, Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento said that the country must be very clear that the investigations are being conducted by two different organizations. On one hand, we have the Investigations and Accusations Committee of the Chamber of Representatives, and on the other, the Prosecutor General's Office.

Valdivieso also guaranteed that the investigations being conducted by the Prosecutor General's Office regarding the Case 8000 will continue no matter what decision is made by the Chamber of Representatives.

[Begin recording] [Valdivieso] The public must be clear that these investigations are being carried out by two different organizations. On one hand, we have the Investigations and Accusations Committee, and on the other, the Prosecutor General's Office. The circumstances will be certainly different. One cannot expect any sort of (?uniformity) regarding the evaluation [words indistinct] the scope of statements, views, and reports, because the contexts are different [words indistinct] as we have mentioned, [word indistinct] is quite certain that the Prosecutor General's Office will continue with its investigation.

[Unidentified reporter] The president's attorney has argued that the Prosecutor General's Office obviously wants to [words indistinct] against the president, and that [words indistinct] in the first question asked to the president. What do you think about this remark?

[Valdivieso] I have always said that the president's attorney will not make me argue with him. This is absolutely clear, especially at this time [words indistinct]. [end recording]

[Camargo] Valdivieso also noted that, under no circumstance, should any decision adopted by the Accusations Committee of the Chamber of Representatives affect the legal situation of those being tried within the framework of the Case 8000 and related actions. Thus, he ruled out any possibility that such a ruling could determine whether or not the accused are sent to prison.

Pastrana Views Committee's Decision

PA1512012395 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Andres Pastrana today reported a suspicious relationship between the Accusations Committee's impediment ruling and drug trafficking.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Is there a relationship between the Committee's decision and the narco-article that the Congress approved yesterday?

[Pastrana] What the Congress did yesterday is the most shameful act in our democracy. First, the Congress admitted we are a narco-democracy. Second, the congressmen acquitted themselves. The Congress was willing to acquit the president when the president himself said there was evidence that drug money had played a part in

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his campaign. To top it off, the congressmen who have been accused of the same offense acquitted themselves. I am asking the Colombian people a question: If it was Botero who put the president in this mess and who received the drug money, why did the president visit the traitor five times in prison?

[Reporter] What do you think of the investigation on Heyne Mogollon?

[Pastrana] Well, I do not believe in such a decision. One person who wears a sweater with the logo of Samper for President cannot judge Samper. [end recording]

Justice Minister Interviewed on Ruling

PA1412194395 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 14 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Justice Minister Nestor Humberto Martinez Neira, place not given, by Dario Arizmendi, Judith Sarmiento, Edgar Artunduaga, Fabio Callejas, Javier Ayala, and Diana Montoya, in Santa Fe de Bogota; from "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Arizmendi] We welcome Justice Minister Nestor Martinez Neira. Good morning.

[Martinez] Good morning, Dario.

[Arizmendi] What is your reaction to the ruling by the Accusations Committee of the House of Representatives on the fate of President Ernesto Samper Pizano? The disqualification ruling stated that the president is not responsible for, was not involved in, that no proofs were found, that there are no grounds to begin a formal inquest of the financing of his political campaign.

[Martinez] I have been cooperating with the Samper government way before he took office with the profound conviction that his actions are completely honest, with the profound conviction that he bore no responsibility for the actions that have come into question. The ruling satisfies me, and I am confident that I, along with the rest of Colombians, will be able to read the content of the file, which the Accusations Committee has assessed. The president several months ago also made this request with the intention of this process being carried out in a clean manner so that the public may be fully informed of all the proofs existing in the investigation.

I am confident the ruling by the Accusations Committee will be endowed in this way with a clear legitimacy. I really feel this is very good news that will allow the country to continue moving forward.

[Arizmendi] So as to better inform all Colombians and our listeners, what is a disqualification ruling?

[Martinez] In this case, I understand that a decision was made to shelve the proceedings for lack of evidence. For that reason, there are no grounds to begin a formal inquest into this phase of the preliminary proceedings that were carried out.

[Arizmendi] Does this affair differ from a judged matter?

[Martinez] That would be the effect, but I am not familiar with the content of the ruling. I understand that it came out in the early morning hours. It could have that impact; it may have the status of a judged matter, as was decided in the respective ruling. We need to read it in order to give an accurate opinion.

[Arizmendi] Would the disqualification ruling make it possible to reopen the proceedings if sufficiently conclusive evidence were found tomorrow?

[Martinez] What I understand is that an exhaustive assessment has been conducted in the appropriate investigation of all the proofs submitted by the prosecutor general and the ones the Accusations Committee collected on its own. For that reason, the investigation must contain acceptable material to establish sufficient clarity on the actions by the president during the electoral campaign. One must harbor the hope, therefore, that this matter is a thing of the past, so we can continue governing to serve the nation's interests as the country requires now.

[Arizmendi] Yesterday was what we in journalism call a day full of heated events. At one point, there were rumors of the possibility putting Liberal Senator Alberto Santofimio Botero under custody, something which the Supreme Court president has denied. Second, the Senate, within the bill of public order, approved an article by 56 pros and 32 cons. This article has triggered great controversy throughout the country and could mean the release of those being tried for presumed illegal enrichment in Case 8000. What is the position of President Ernesto Samper's government regarding this initiative, which has already been approved by the Senate and will be discussed by the Chamber of Representatives today?

[Martinez] I clearly noted on behalf of the government yesterday that the initiative discussed in the Senate was obviously unconstitutional, and there are four fundamental reasons that make it unconstitutional: First, we are now working on both a bill on the protection of citizens that seeks to restore order on the streets of the country's cities and on the law against thieves or those who are looking out for girls to attack them on the street.

An article determining that the rulings handed down by the Constitutional Court can no longer become

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overnight a mere interpretation mechanism for the country's authorities. This matter is foreign to the project. I have said in this regard it violates Article 158. Furthermore, from the viewpoint of its content, it sharply disrupts the European continental legal system, which we have been implementing on a trial basis and developing in Colombia throughout our republican history. This system clearly establishes the only source of regulations or rule of conduct we as citizens are compelled to observe is the law.

The judges in our legal system do not issue laws or compelling regulations of conduct. This is a characteristic of the English system. The norm, which the Senate approved yesterday, states the opposite. It says that besides the law, all Constitutional Court rulings become compelling regulations of conduct, including for all authorities. In this way, it breaks with the Roman-Germanic system, which is comprised in our own Constitution.

Article 230 of the Constitution clearly states that the constitutional doctrine, jurisprudence is a mere interpretation mechanism of the legal activities; nevertheless, the article states that the constitutional doctrine is a mechanism of interpretation, except in three cases, which the legislator would develop in accordance with the aforementioned project approved yesterday by the Senate, obviously, in contradiction with Article 230 of the Constitution. [sentence as heard]

[Arizmendi] What will the government try to do in order for the Chamber of Representatives to amend and modify today that decision which the Senate approved yesterday and which is unconstitutional, according to you?

[Martinez] The public is aware of all the hardships the government experienced during discussions of the various initiatives on strengthening the legal system and fighting crime. We took this initiative within this one and a half year of administration; nevertheless, I should mention with great satisfaction that the government's intentions were always inspired by the interest of serving the nation, although many of the initiatives have experienced difficulties and have not been implemented.

I hope that with all the arguments we will present before the full session of the Chamber of Representatives the majority of the representatives will support us once again in refraining from the introduction of this article, which is unconstitutional. In case the article is passed, I would have to add that following the constitutional instances of this law, the government will be forced to veto this article due to its unconstitutionality as well as inconvenience.

Furthermore, to continue toward a state of law in which the judges issue regulations of conduct will be a challenge to the order and legal security in our country.

[Sarmiento] What are the concrete arguments the government will present to defeat that initiative approved yesterday at the Senate?

[Martinez] We have a number of doctrines, documents, and Constitutional Court rulings that will accredit our claims of unconstitutionality and in this way disqualify the decision of the plenary session to approve it; furthermore, we will detail and identify the factors allowing us to say that this initiative is highly inconvenient for the country.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, it is appropriate to clarify this issue in this regard. According to what you are saying, we understand that because the article is awkward, it is also inconvenient as to how it affects the country's legal system. It is not a measure—a monkey or even an orangutan, as we call it here—for drug trafficking or anything of this sort. What is your interpretation at this level?

[Martinez] It is not a matter of nicknames, even though it is, in fact, of journalistic interest. It is a substantive problem that pertains to form. This issue would greatly hurt Colombia's juridical and legal system. If this article is approved with hidden agendas, we, the authorities, are responsible for not permitting this regulation to become a law of the Republic. In case an open debate is desired on current legal cases, it should be done within this context, and decisions should be made always bearing in mind the nation's interests and the protection of the country's juridical system.

[Sarmiento] Mr. Minister, our colleague Diana Montoya, from the Miami Caracol International Center, would like to ask the following question.

[Montoya] My question might be in the minds of many listeners who are listening to your words now. After drug trafficking projects and attempts to include a number of measures in various bills, you wonder why the Colombian Congress keeps approving these types of articles, which are inconvenient and unconstitutional and which many people interpret, as you know, as a drug trafficking move.

[Martinez] As I said earlier, we have had some difficulties regarding the initiatives Congress has discussed. There have been articles, proposals, and initiatives, but I want to say this with optimism and be optimistic today. In the end, Congress has supported most of these government initiatives and has finally shelved them. This led us to believe these events would no longer happen

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in the future. I am still optimistic. The government's arguments are overwhelming. There would not be enough grounds for most in the plenum to support this initiative and its creators.

[Unidentified reporter] What has happened to the other initiative which the prosecutor general and yourself had considered, on behalf of the government, as inconvenient and which was also included in the law establishing measures to fight kidnapping in Colombia? Was this initiative approved? Did the government succeed in having it removed from this bill, or is it pending approval or discussion at the Senate today?

[Martinez] No, Samuel. We should clearly say that the Senate and chamber commissions that first discussed the anti-kidnapping bill heard about an initiative intended to finally abolish regional justice and to modify and abolish every special regulation in criminal law that was issued in Colombia over the past 15 years to confront the various types of crime affecting us. This initiative was rejected by the commissions, thus preventing it from being discussed further by the plenum in accordance with congressional regulations; therefore, this phantom can no longer hunt the ant- kidnapping bill.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, it is being said in political circles that the crisis in President Ernesto Samper's cabinet will boil up this weekend and that he will issue a decree containing new appointments on 18 December. Do you want to stay in your post? Are you going to work at an embassy? It is being said you will be appointed ambassador to Austria.

[Martinez] No, actually, I do not know what the course of political events will be once the current legislative session ends and the recent events that have become known nationwide are resolved. I am obligated on behalf of Colombia to sign an agreement with the EU this weekend so as to prevent the deviation of chemical precursors. Colombia has played a leading role in negotiating this agreement on behalf of all the Andean Group countries. This agreement will be signed during a special meeting with EU justice ministers in Madrid.

That is my only commitment for now. I hope to fulfill it as I have agreed with the president of the Republic. My life is one of public service. I will fundamentally do what is best for the government of President Samper. What I do not look forward to is obtaining a position in the diplomatic service in places where I will not be of use for the government.

[Artunduaga] Is that why, in the face of a show business like question posed to you, you were asked whether you were going to be named ambassador to Austria and you replied: I do not accept?

[Martinez] I can put it in a milder way. My daughter is over 15 years of age, and she has already learned how to waltz. I do not think Vienna will be it.

[Arizmendi] And what about an appointment at another embassy where a different type of music, salsa, can be danced?

[Martinez] No, Dario. Frankly, I have 20 years of professional service in public administration. If I consider that my professional service can continue being of use and positive for the country, I will go wherever the president of the Republic requires, but I think I would step down and make way for others to serve rather than serve in places where I will not be called upon to fulfill a positive and constructive service at this critical hour of the nation.

[Arizmendi] Would you rather serve in Colombia than abroad?

[Martinez] I arrived from abroad one and a half years ago, and I have roots in my homeland. If I could continue working for the country, God willing, I really would like to stay in Colombia.

Committee: No Grounds for Probe

PA1412202295 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Colombia 12:30" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] At 0330 this morning and after 135 days, the Accusations Committee of the House of Representatives issued a ruling on the inquest conducted on President Ernesto Samper on the alleged infiltration of drug money in his political campaign. As was expected, the ruling concurred with that of investigating Representative Heyne Mogollon Montoya:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] A disqualification ruling was issued. It was approved by 14 votes in favor and one against. All this means is that there are no sufficient grounds right now to begin a formal investigation; thus, it means the inquiry will be reopened if major or serious evidence is discovered later. [end recording]

Besides the president, the happiest man was his lawyer, Antonio Jose Cancino, who appeared the minute the news was known:

[Begin Cancino recording] I am highly satisfied, first for the president and his family and second for the Colombian state, which has a president whose innocence has been irrefutably demonstrated. Those seeking in an irresponsible and hasty manner to deny the president the

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significance of this ruling could be close to a [words indistinct] [end recording]

Pending is the interpellation to be broadcast via television so that the country can learn of the details of an investigation that never made headway due to a lack of evidence.

Economic Officials 'Reassured' by Ruling

PA1412224995 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Colombia 12:30" Newscast; reporter and speakers identified by caption]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Accusations Committee of the Chamber of Representatives's decision has reassured not just President Ernesto Samper. Today economic officials started feeling that the dark clouds are dissipating.

[Reporter Mauricio Arroyave] Thanks to the ruling of the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee favoring President Samper, the country's economic panorama for next year is clearing up. This is how the government and production unions agreed on. They pointed out that the economic uncertainty the political crisis has triggered has come to an end.

[Begin recording] [Finance Minister Guillermo Perry] I believe that this uncertainty and discouragement that emerged with the so- called political crisis is coming to an end, which is quite positive for the economy.

[Sabas Pretelt De la Vega, National Federation of Businessmen, Fenalco, president] Now we are trying to rule the country with a clear vision and to eliminate the uncertainty we are currently facing.

[Cesar Gonzalez, Bankers Association, Asobancaria, president, in progress] ...ignore, but fully obey the process and the end of this process at the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee. [end recording]

[Arroyave] The finance minister said that this is a good December for the government regarding economic matters: the political panorama is clearing up, the tax reform has been approved, and the Social Pact is moving ahead.

Citizens 'Not Suprised' by Ruling

PA1512031095 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2049 GMT 14 Dec 95

[By correspondent Martha Trujillo]

[FBIS Translated Excerpts] Santa Fe de Bogota, 14 Dec (NOTIMEX) — Colombians were not surprised at the decision the Accusations Committee made to inhibit itself from opening a formal investigation on President Ernesto Samper because his campaign had alleged ties with the drug mafia.

Politicians, columnists, and the [words indistinct] of people believed that it was a decision everybody was expecting due to the recent history of the parliamentarian investigations and to the pressure the government party exerted on this legislative committee.

With 14 votes in favor and one against, in the early morning of 14 December, the Committee decided to inhibit itself from opening a process against the Colombian ruler, because it did not find enough evidence involving him in the infiltration of illegal moneys in his political campaign.

"It was a predictable and foretold ruling," political analyst Enrique Santos said, adding that "no one was expecting this legislative body to find evidence against the president."

"There is nothing new in the Committee's ruling, because it was what we expected," Jaime Arias, Conservative Party Board of Directors president, pointed out, while insisting that Samper must subject himself to a political trial to dispel all doubts on his conduct. [passage omitted]

The opposition daily EL NUEVO SIGLO commented that "the foretold chronicle on what was going to happen — that is, that no substantial elements implicating the president was going to be found — had crossed the minds of all Colombians."

In the opinion of the morning daily, which is owned by the family of murdered Conservative Party leader Alvaro Gomez Hurtado, "the investigator had a premeditated objective to not open a formal investigation of Samper, despite all the evidence of which the country was aware." [passage omitted]

Samper Urges Stoppage of 'Narco-Rider'

PA1412233095 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2201 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Attention. President Ernesto Samper has just ended an extensive meeting with Horacio Serpa and Nestor Humberto Martinez, interior and justice ministers respectively. During that meeting, he asked both of them to attend the session of the Chamber of Representatives this afternoon and remain there until the session is over, to prevent the approval of the so-called narco-rider on illegal enrichment.

Narino Palace has just told RCN that during the meeting with Ministers Serpa Uribe and Martinez Neira the

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president asked them to firmly and at all times oppose on behalf of the government the approval by the Chamber of Representatives of the article approved yesterday by the Senate.

Meanwhile, Narino Palace announced that President Samper's speech on the inhibiting ruling [fallo inhibitorio] issued by the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee and the narco-rider will be transmitted by the three television networks tonight at 1900 [0000 GMT]. The president's address was scheduled for 2100, but at the last moment it was advanced 60 minutes.

Here is the official communique issued by Narino Palace: It textually and laconically reads as follows:

President Ernesto Samper Pizano has just ended an extensive meeting with his interior and justice ministers, during which they analyzed in detail the possible implications of the article included yesterday by the plenum of the Senate in the Citizens Security Bill.

The president clearly and specifically asked the ministers to be present at the Chamber of Representatives' plenary session this afternoon and oppose the approval of that article.

A bloc of at least 100 representatives today asked the Chamber of Representatives to approve the so-called narco-rider, which downgrades illegal enrichment, turning it into a related crime [delito conexo] instead of a major crime [delito principal]. This group, headed by Roberto Herrera, began a campaign during the Chamber's plenary session to exert pressure for the approval of the controversial article, which last night was supported by the majority in the Senate.

Chamber Official: Rider 'Hecatomb'

PA1512021795 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Before ending the newscast, we have an update by Juan Carlos Mateus on what is going on at the plenum of the Senate with the narco-rider.

[Mateus] Good evening, we are now completing more than two and a half hours of heated debates at the Chamber of Representatives due to the so-called narco-article. The plenary session has now been changed into a permanent session. Here we are with Isabel Celis, Chamber of Representatives vice president.

Dr. Celis, did the dead article come alive again?

[Celis] The Board of Directors, on the afternoon of 14 December, while following the rules, was trying to prevent the hecatomb that was seen coming, because the approval of this narco-article, as it has been wisely labeled, is nothing more than a legal hecatomb, the hecatomb of the country. Unfortunately, the laws also allow that the decisions of the Board of Directors... [break in reception]

President Views Ruling, 'Narco-Rider'

PA1512020995 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio and Television Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Address to the nation by President Ernesto Samper Pizano on the Accusation Committee's decision; in Santa Fe de Bogota on 15 December 1995 — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colombians: A new opportunity opens itself for the country with the Accusation Committee's decision, announced in the first hours of the morning after an intensive session and debate. This opportunity is for us all to look forward and work together for Colombia.

The Accusation Committee's decision closes a very difficult chapter for the entire nation and for me in particular. This process was not devoid of difficulties. No other citizen has seen his right to a defense so severely threatened. First, it was the cowardly attack on Antonio Jose Cancino, my defense lawyer, who was intimidated by the assassin's bullets that snuffed out his bodyguards' lives. Second, they tried to disqualify the investigator representative and even threatened all of the Committee members.

To rule out the Committee's competency to investigate the president of the Republic, juridical moves were used which the prosecutor general himself and the Constitutional Court cleared. I have kept silent throughout these past months so my opinion on the slander and insults aimed at me could not be interpreted as a desire to influence at all justice's decision.

With this same firmness and determination, I want to tell those who, after the decision was announced, insist on jeopardizing my honor or setting the government aside that I will not hesitate to use every single legal means at my disposal to keep their actions from prospering and doing further harm.

The country knows that as soon as I learned about the reports on the infiltration of drug money into my campaign I have made every effort to have the evidence investigated to determine the truth. I said that if drug money had indeed infiltrated my campaign, it must have taken place without my knowledge. I added that at no time could such an infiltration have led to a commitment, nor could it have caused any satisfaction, in the struggle against drug trafficking. This is proven

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by the overwhelming results of the struggle against drug trafficking that has taken place during my term. Such results can be regarded as the greatest in the long history of fighting drug trafficking in Colombia.

It is possible for the ethical controls we established to prove insufficient. Let no one, absolutely no one, entertain the slightest doubt that we did everything possible to avoid any harmful penetration. I know that for some people who hurried to question the decision even without knowing its nature, the only possible way out, yesterday and today, was a thumbs-down verdict. For them and their political purposes, justice meant a condemnation, regardless of the president's behavior, the evidence, and truth.

They deliberately ignore that, in a state of law such as the one that rules us, justice is done both when the culprit is punished and when an innocent person is acquitted. As I offered to the country when this process started, my innocence has been proven. I am asking Congress to lift the prohibition against revealing proceedings before a decision had been reached and to make the proceedings public.

I urge all the Colombians to gain information about the details of the process; I urge the media to report at length and truthfully on all aspects of the process.

Let evidence be examined by whoever may want to examine it; let testimonies be analyzed; let every citizen determine the origin of the slander, from where it arose and how evidence was sought, how all set-ups were disproved, and how all lies were refuted.

Let there be no shadow of a doubt over the truth, which exonerates me.

I am satisfied with the way the national governament, with the president at the head of it, backed the authorities' investigatory task and broadly granted freedom of the press, allowing newsmen to exercise without restriction their right to inform all the Colombian people.

I hope that the opportunity I had to demonstrate my innocence will be granted to other persons who are currently facing processes, beginning with former Minister Fernando Botero Zea.

Now we must continue governing. We will concentrate our efforts on continuing with the social leap, which has been very successful and it is something many people do not know about.

In the next few days I will report on the achievements of the Social Solidarity Network and on its employment, housing, education, and health aspects.

The Social Pact is yielding its first fruits, and the inflation rate has dropped three points this year.

We have to ignore the myth that the economy is doing badly, because it is doing well.

We are going to continue fighting drug-trafficking head on. I am certain that drugs could continue being the worst enemy of Colombian society.

At this moment the Chamber of Representatives is debating an initiative that has to do with a Constitutional Court interpretation of illegal acquisition of wealth.

The country knows that the government and the Prosecutor General's Office have found serious deficiencies in the implementation of constitutional principles that guarantee all citizens, without exception, the right to a defense, to secret proceedings, and the assumption of innocence.

I believe, though, that the bill that has been approved is not an adequate path for correcting the disquieting situation.

This is why my government has announced its opposition to that article and the interior and justice ministers have clearly proclaimed this in the corresponding debates.

This is not about disqualifying Congress or the congressmen who presented or supported the legal modification. It is not good to bitterly blame each other and to exhibit dirty linen every time we do not agree with something or do not interpret something the same way, and then appear before the world as something we are not, a narco-democracy. But just as clearly I must announce to the country that if this bill is passed by the Chamber of Representatives, I will make use of attributions the Constitution grants me to veto the bill for the reasons just mentioned.

We need less squabbles among us and more struggling against our problems. I urge you all, without exception, to leave behind the winds of crises and to give optimism a new opportunity.

Colombians: I am fully aware of the fact that fate wanted me to carry a cross that did not belong to me, a cross made of many painful years during which our society coexisted with drug-trafficking, be it out of fear, or ambition, or seduction, or simply out of tolerance.

I accepted with serenity this destiny, because I am now convinced more than ever that we are face to face with the historic opportunity to finally emerge from the dark tunnel of 20 years of drug trafficking and corruption.

During this time I have watched in silence many people tear their stained garments and smite their breasts over someone else's guilt. I watched with a certain sadness

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how political opportunism and the Pharasaism of many made bedfellows.

Even though these have been difficult times, I want to tell you that today I see these adversaries as being none other than those who made use of these circumstances to destabilize democracy or prevent the government from fulfilling its social commitments with the people.

I shall continue to summon Colombian society, much the same way I did after Alvaro Gomez Hurtado's regrettable assassination, and I will not tire doing so. The times we are experiencing are times for conciliation and not confrontation. The role of head of state during times of crisis is not one of division, but of coming together. The worst thing that could happen to us during these moments is to end up a divided society on account or due to drug trafficking.

Unity against crime is the moment's watchword. I therefore invite all those willing to leave aside small, selfish, and short- term calculations, to think big to help Colombia. Everyone who wants to do something to make this country great will always be welcome in my administration.

During all these days, which have been painful for me, for Jacquin, and my children, I always had the backing of my conscience, the solidarity of my government team, and the encouraging voice of many friendly people.

A thousand thanks to those humble and hopeful people; to those good people from the provinces who during these months gave me strength with their support and prayers. Rest assured that as president I will overcome, as I have now, all obstacles placed before me and will continue to work for you and continue generating new opportunities for millions of Colombians who are still waiting.

You may also be sure that I will not allow these opportunities to be missed, which are available today, to continue building between all of us the opportunity for the people, the opportunity for the good people of Colombia.

May God enlighten us and accompany us in this task. Good night.

Chamber Continues Drug-Article Debate

PA1512041395 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0230 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Report by Marta Eugenia; from the "QAP News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Chamber of Representatives is still agitated over the hot potato that the Senate handed them by passing the drug-article that would drown Case 8000. Government Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe is speaking at this time. The representatives who favor the controversial article gave the floor to the government representatives and the prosecutor general. The representatives wanted to listen to them first so they could refute them.

Serpa Uribe explained that this unconstitutional and undesirable rider would change 200 years of the country's juridical history because, if it is approved, it would be the Constitutional Court, not the Congress, which would make the law.

At the start of the debate, an attempt at creating an uproar occurred when some representatives tried to shelve the article without debating it. This is the story:

The rider was dead for 15 minutes. The Chamber's secretary advised it could not be passed because no one had proposed it.

[Begin Chamber of Representatives President Rodrigo Rivera recording] If no representative endorses the proposal presented, we will refrain from submitting it to debate by the plenum. [end recording]

When the rider was virtually buried, Representative Carlos Alonso Lucio pressured for reopening the debate because the author of the proposal, Octavio Carmona, had already shown up.

[Begin Lucio recording] I am asking the plenum to reopen the debate so we can discuss the article. [end recording]

An attempt at creating confusion was made because those who opposed the narco-article also opposed the reopening the debate. The attempt was unsuccessful and 78 representatives who will surely vote for the drug-article succeeded in having the debate reopened. So far, 15 representatives, all of them opposing the narco-article, have taken the floor.

[Begin recording] [Ingrid Betancur] We cannot legislate serving any interests, either ours, those of our friends, or those of our political bosses, if any.

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[Yaneth Suarez] And this article, gentlemen representatives, opposes the national interest. [end recording]

The seven committee members declared themselves impeded from participating in the debate. For this article to be approved, the yes vote of at least 86 representatives is required. Seventy-eight of them have already said they will vote yes.

Senators Voice 'Regret' on Rider Votes

PA1512044495 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0230 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "QAP News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, a group of senators stated their regret over having voted in favor of the narco-rider. How do they explain their mistake? Some say they were ill-advised, others claim they do not know the law, that they thought they were voting for something constitutional.

Congress is being questioned for having approved last night what is already known as the narco-rider, and in view of the consequences, some senators have come out to explain their vote.

[Begin recording] [Senator Manuel Moreno] I was persuaded by Senator Mario Uribe's defense of the article. It was a convincing defense in line with constitutional norms.

[Senator Lorenzo Muelas] Initially I was going to vote against it. This is what we had agreed on, but in his lengthy discourse, Senator Mario Uribe was able to justify that what he defended was constitutional. [end recording]

Other senators stated their remorse more clearly.

[Begin recording] [Senator Juan Guillermo Angel] I was told that the article was to ratify that the rulings of the Constitutional Court are of obligatory compliance, but if it actually goes against national interests and the law itself, I did not understand that, and I declare myself defeated.

[Senator Luis Fernando Londono] They said this was about ratifying a ruling of the Constitutional Court. [end recording]

Today the existence of a rider more serious than yesterday's rider became known, and it was authored by the same person. It was not approved, because no one dared present it.

Congress Passes Law To Close Ruling

PA1512050395 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0230 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "QAP News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Article 182 of the Justice Statutory Law, pertaining to the investigations being conducted by the Accusations Committee, reads: Once the term is up, the investigating representative will pronounce an inhibitory ruling or the opening of an investigation. The inhibitory ruling will be discussed and approved by the entire Accusations Committee.

This is how the law currently works. The innovation comes at the end of the article with the following phrase: and it will become a closed case. This means that the inhibitory ruling pronounced in the early morning in favor of President Ernesto Samper would become a closed case, that is, the case would remain closed, filed, and could not be reopened even in view of new evidence.

The article, which looks more like a rider, was passed by Congress and is currently being studied by the Constitutional Court, which is reviewing all of the articles contained in the statutory law.

Chamber of Deputies Rejects 'Narco-Rider'

PA1512045895 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0417 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 14 Dec (NOTIMEX) — The Colombian Congress today sank the bill that intended to release numerous people who are in prison for alleged illegal enrichment.

Legislative sources reported that some of these people are involved in the scandal of the infiltration of money from the drug trafficking mafias in politics.

The Chamber of Deputies tonight overwhelmingly rejected what the media called the "narco-rider," which intended to make illegal enrichment a secondary crime with easy release from prison.

The legislative's decision occurred a few hours after President Samper threatened to veto the proposal should the Congress approve it.

The proposal had been approved 24 hours earlier by the Senate's plenum. This elicited an angry reaction from Justice Minister Nestor Humberto Martinez and Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso. The two officials said the measure represented "a step backward in the struggle against corruption and drug-trafficking rings."

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Now that the proposal has been nixed, those who at present are in prison on charges of receiving illegal funds, many of them on drug trafficking activities, should remain behind bars.

Supreme Court Issues Arrest Warrant for Senator

PA1512012895 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attention, the Supreme Court of Justice [CSJ] has just issued an arrest warrant, without having the right to bail, for Liberal Senator Alberto Santofimio Botero for having committed the crime of illegal enrichment. The CSJ forwarded the arrest warrant to the Technical Investigation Body of the Prosecutor General's Office, which, at this time, must be carrying it out to transfer him to La Modelo Prison.

The CSJ... [pauses] The evidence the CSJ found can be proved to a large extent, because it was proven that the Liberal senator reportedly received more than 100 million pesos from the Cali group for his electoral campaign.

In addition, the CSJ corroborated statements Pallomari made on 7 December to faceless judges. It was also known that the defense team of the Liberal senator was quite weak, which led to the arrest warrant. The authorities will freeze the bank accounts of Senator Santofimio.

We will reporting more from the CSJ on the capture of Liberal Senator Santofimio.

Ecuador

Cabinet Voices 'Unwavering' Support for Duran-Ballen

PY1512012395 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Sixto Duran-Ballen's cabinet today confirmed its unwavering solidarity and support for the president, who is facing a severe political crisis.

The cabinet members stated that they fully believe in the president's honesty, wisdom, and leadership capacity.

Health Minister Alfredo Palacios said that the president enjoys the cabinet's full support.

Palacios made these comments after attending a cabinet meeting summoned by the chief of state to assess the country's current policy, following the charges by former Bank Superintendent Jose Iturralde.

Palacios said that the microfilm problem must be solved by the corresponding authorities and added: We have met and decided to maintain a very firm attitude so that everything that may seem obscure may become perfectly clear.

Former Presidents Urge Duran-Ballen To Resign

PY1412204995 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 1700 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Alleged corruption charges raised against the president, his relatives and several government officials have unleashed a war of charges and denials and a deluge of threats and slander suits.

Several groups have charged the president with allegedly concealing evidence in the so-called Dahik case involving former Vice President Alberto Dahik, who fled to Costa Rica after being charged with the embezzlement of public funds.

The charges increased when Duran-Ballen issued a secret decree, which henceforth has been annulled, through which he declared himself sole custodian of the microfilms containing documents of the discretionary funds allocated to the Vice Presidency and which are under a court investigation. [passage omitted]

Two of the president's daughters, Susana and Alicia, have publicly announced that all those who insist in that discretionary funds have been used to pay creditors of Duran-Ballen's in-laws, who were sued for a fraud case, will be sued.

Susana Duran-Ballen, who requested people to stop inventing nonexistent situations, said: It is not only my family who has been damaged by all this. This entire situation has received extensive coverage abroad and now Ecuador is viewed as a country submerged in political cannibalism.

After urging people to have courage and to submit evidence and documents to justify their charges, she said: I will sue all those who continue to criticize the family.

Moreover, former Ecuadoran President Carlos Arosemena Monroy [1961-1963] today said that it has been clearly proven that current President Sixto Duran-Ballen is involved in the alleged embezzlement of discretionary funds allocated to the vice president's office.

Arosemena's agrees with Attorney General Fernande Casares who said that there is sufficient reason to include Duran-Ballen in the trial that the Supreme Court is conducting against former Vice President Alberto Dahik, among others. Dahik resigned from his post two

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months ago, a few hours before escaping to Costa Rica after a warrant for his arrest was issued.

Arosemana said: I believe that President Duran-Ballen's involvement in the embezzlement of discretionary funds has been clearly proven. He added, however, that it is clearly up to Supreme Court President Carlos Solorzano to make the final decision.

Arosemana Monroy denied that the Ecuadoran democratic system will be jeopardized if Duran-Ballen is ever prosecuted. He said that on the contrary democracy will be strengthened. [passage omitted]

Former Ecuadoran President Rodrigo Borja [1988-1992] reasserted again today that his successor, current President Sixto Duran-Ballen cannot remain in power one minute longer because he has been involved in a corruption scandal.

Borja said: As a former consitutional president I am unfortunately compelled to insist on Duran-Ballen's resignation. [passage omitted]

According to Borja, the president must resign in view of reports which among other things charge that President Duran-Ballen has expanded his summer property located in the city of Bahia de Caraquez, located in the Ecuadoran central coast, through the misappropriation of public properties.

Peru

Reportage on U.S. Citizen Charged With High Treason

Report: Military Court To Try

PY1512125095 Madrid EFE in Spanish
2312 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lima, 14 Dec (EFE) — It was reported today in Lima that U.S. citizen Lori Helen Berenson, who has been formally charged with being a member of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), will be tried by a military court on charges of allegedly having committed high treason.

This is what Grimaldo Achahui, Berenson's Peruvian lawyer, told the press when he arrived today at the National Counterterrorism Directorate (Dincote) headquarters where Berenson is being detained and where she is undergoing questioning. Achahui added that he has already been summoned by a military judge.

According to Peruvian antiterrorist laws, the maximum penalty for those found guilty of high treason is life imprisonment. [passage omitted]

Attorney: Military Trial Unreasonable

PY1412215095 Madrid EFE in Spanish
0252 GMT 13 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lima, 12 Dec (EFE) — Peruvian attorney Grimaldo Achahui, who is defending U.S. citizen Lori Helen Berenson, charged with terrorism in Peru, today said that there are no reasons for his client to be tried by a military court.

He said that Berenson may be tried on grounds of cooperating with the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) terrorist organization, but in no way could she be charged with being an MRTA member or leader.

In remarks to the press Achahui today said that Berenson "was deceived, manipulated and used" by the MRTA.

He added that in compliance with the law Berenson must be tried by a civilian and not by a military court.

According to Peruvian antiterrorist law, military courts are in charge of hearing aggravated terrorism cases which have been typified as "high treason," and those found guilty are sentenced to life imprisonment.

Aggravated terrorism cases encompass those attacks that have resulted in the deaths of individuals. It is also applied to subversive groups leaders because they are considered to be the masterminds of the murders and destruction caused by their followers.

Rodha Berenson, Lori Helen Berenson's mother, today visited her daughter at the National Counterterrorism Directorate (Dincote) headquarters, where she is being held for questioning after she was arrested on 30 November as she was leaving Congress building.

On that occasion the police confiscated a false journalist credential from her. They also charged her with being an MRTA member and with participating in the subversive plan that intended to take over Congress with the objective of kidnapping the lawmakers to later exchange them for imprisoned MRTA leaders.

Miguel Rincon, the MRTA "number two" leader, and more than 20 followers were arrested in Lima's La Molina after a shootout that lasted eight hours one day after Berenson's arrest.

Police sources said that further investigations revealed that the group planned to take over Congress and to kidnap the Peruvian prime minister.

Berenson's mother arrived in Lima on 12 December after her husband Mark Berenson returned to the United States. Today she went to the Dincote jail to visit her daughter.

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Arrest of Top MRTA Terrorist Detailed

PY1412214295 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 5 Dec 95 p A13

[FBIS Translated Text] Two hours after the surrender of Miguel Wenceslao Rincon Rincon, the Dincote [National Counterterrorism Directorate] captured another leader of the MRTA [Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement] in San Juan de Lurigancho, who is considered an important member of the current "national board" and whom the police have followed for almost eight months to get to the number two of this terrorist group.

He is Manuel Serna Ponce (40), "Max" or "Daniel," who was arrested on Proceres de la Independencia Avenue in Canto Rey, on 1 December.

This terrorist was one of the founders of the MRTA in November 1984 and Dincote detectives learned about his whereabouts in April 1995, after years of search.

They knew about the rank he was holding within the MRTA and decided to follow him. During all these months the terrorist held contacts with a number of people, among them the U.S. citizen Lori Helen Berenson Mejia (26).

There were only references and presumptions until the morning of 30 November when "Max" contacted Rincon Rincon himself, who was driving a private van, on the intersection of Tomas Marsano and Villaran Avenues, in Surquillo.

Afterwards, "Max" returned to Canto Rey. Rincon Rincon picked up Panamanian citizen Pacifico Castrejon Santamaria (48) near there and they went to the house in La Molina Vieja.

Rincon Rincon gets off there, but the Panamanian continues on the van to buy bread. He is arrested there, thus triggering the 12 hours of tension, blood, and fire which ended up with the surrender of Miguel Rincon Rincon and 20 other terrorists.

Judicial Branch Requests Arrest of Ex-President Garcia

PY1512023995 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1458 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lima, 14 Dec (EFE) — The Peruvian judicial branch has asked the International Police (Interpol) of France to immediately locate and arrest former Peruvian President Alan Garcia, who is accused of presumed corruption during his administration.

Judicial sources reported today that Supreme Court Judge Hugo Sivina on 13 December sent a note to the French INTERPOL headquarters to immediately locate Garcia, who has been in Paris since October 1995 after giving up the political asylum granted by Colombia since 1992.

Sivina and Jorge Mello Vega, the special prosecutor designated for his case, will decide today on the steps to be followed by the Peruvian Justice Department following the Colombian Supreme Court's abstention to issue a ruling for Garcia's extradition due to his absence from the country.

By mid-May, Sivina had taken legal action against Garcia for his alleged illegal accumulation of wealth. He is currently accused of bribery, embezzlement, and illegal collusion.

Uruguay

Reportage on Alleged Shining Path Terrorists

Police Track Alleged Peruvian Terrorists

PY1412153595 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0013 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Montevideo, 13 Dec (EFE) — The Interior Ministry today reported that, pursuant to a court warrant, the Uruguayan police are tracking two alleged members of the Peruvian Shining Path terrorist organization, who entered Uruguay with forged Bolivian papers and under false identities.

The Interpol section of the Uruguayan police reported that the Peruvians are Fernando Torres Campos, 42; Rosa Cespedes Miranda, 27; and a three-year-old girl. They arrived in Uruguay by plane and dodged customs checks with forged Bolivian papers. Shortly after arriving they went to the headquarters of the National Liberation Movement, the former Tupamaros guerrilla, where they sought shelter, claiming they were being pursued by unidentified individuals.

Guillermo Chiflet, a deputy for the leftwing coalition Broad Front, which was joined by the Tupamaros, today told journalists that the Peruvians were sheltered for humanitarian reasons over a possible violation of their rights. He added that the arrest warrant had not been issued at that time.

The two Peruvians, accompanied by Broad Front Senator Helios Sarthou and other Uruguayan leftist leaders, went to the UNHCR headquarters in Montevideo to ask for refugee status.

The Interior Ministry reported that, at the UNHCR headquarters in Montevideo, the two Peruvians identified themselves as Luis Alberto Miguel Samaniego and Silvia Sonia Gora Rivera.

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The UNHCR told the police that, after applying for refugee status, the Peruvians left and their whereabouts are unknown.

After their identities were disclosed, the police confirmed that an arrest warrant has been issued in Peru against Gora Rivera "for illegally forming an armed group." Bolivia has also asked for Gora Rivera's expulsion from our country.

Unofficial sources have reported that the Maoist gang members attempted to open bank accounts in Uruguay to collect the ransom they sought for releasing Bolivian entrepreneur Samuel Doria Medina, a former minister, who was abducted in La Paz a month ago.

The Interior Ministry reported that, after submitting the background information, the Montevideo Third Criminal Court judge directed that the Peruvians be detained and questioned. The Interior Ministry noted that efforts are being made to determine their whereabouts.

The Montevideo newspaper EL PAIS reported that the FBI, the U.S. federal police, had warned of the possible arrival of the Shining Path terrorists in Uruguay.

Alleged Terrorists Appear in Court

PY1412175995 Madrid EFE in Spanish
1648 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Montevideo, 14 Dec (EFE) — The two Peruvian citizens who were being tracked by the Uruguayan police for allegedly being members of the Shining Path terrorist organization today appeared at the Montevideo court that issued an arrest warrant against them. They were accompanied by an attorney.

Luis Alberto Miguel Samaniego and Silvia Gora Rivera, who is living in Uruguay with her three-year-old daughter, who is wanted by the Peruvian courts, and for whom an expulsion writ had been issued in Bolivia, voluntarily placed themselves at the disposal of the courts and were summoned to appear on 15 December. [passage omitted]

In brief remarks at the courts, the two Peruvians emphasized that they had escaped from their country because they were being harassed for their ideas and had sought shelter in Bolivia. They said they also felt harassed in Bolivia, so they decided to move to Uruguay. [passage omitted]

Courts Release Alleged Terrorists

PY1512125395 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish
2259 GMT 14 Dec 95

[Report by unidentified correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Montevideo, 14 Dec (TELAM-SNI) — The Uruguayan courts this afternoon released the two Peruvian citizens who are allegedly members of the terrorist group Shining Path. The two Peruvians entered the country illegally last weekend.

Montevideo Judge Eduardo Borges reported that as he was in agreement with the prosecutor's decision, he ordered the release of Alberto Samaniego and Silvia Gora Rivera because no "request for their arrest or extradition has been received from the Peruvian authorities."

According to Uruguayan police and media reports, Samaniego and Gora Rivera are linked to Shining Path and to the kidnapping of Samuel Doria Medina, a Bolivian businessman and a former planning minister, in the city of La Paz on 1 November.

The reports stress that the two Peruvian citizens presumably came to Uruguay to use the local banking system to collect the ransom money for the kidnapping of Doria Medina.

Judge Borges maintained that Samaniego and Gora Rivera "presented themselves voluntarily" in his office at noon today, in the company of Uruguayan lawyer Gustavo Puig.

He highlighted the fact that the Peruvian citizens "had not committed any crime in Uruguay," and that they had fled their country "because their ideas are contrary to those of President Alberto Fujimori's regime," the Peruvians told him.

The judge indicated that Samaniego and Gora Rivera traveled to the city of Quito, Ecuador, where they obtained the false Bolivian passports, and then they traveled to Montevideo.

He highlighted the fact that although the Peruvian citizens had entered Uruguay with false documents, "they revealed their real identities" when they were received by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Montevideo.

The magistrate indicated that Samaniego and Gora Rivera "can leave Uruguayan territory whenever they wish." [passage omitted]

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Venezuela

Interior Minister Denies Rumors of Civil War

PA1412194995 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 10 Dec 95 p 9D

[Report by Freddy Torres]

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Ramon Escovar Salom denied that there is the risk of having a civil war in Venezuela, as various Democratic Action leaders have predicted.

Escovar Salom who attended the Sixth Congress of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) held at the Central Park Plenary Hall, refrained from making any comments on the situation in Zulia. He added that before making any statements he would wait for the results in Zulia.

In regard to the accusations against Venezuelan Ambassador in Colombia Abdon Vivas Teran, who was incriminated in car theft activities in that country, Escovar said, "that information was refuted."

[Escovar] In any case, the Foreign Ministry is the one qualified to give more concrete information on the subject. Nevertheless, I hope the situation will be clarified soon.

[Torres] Isn't the fact that Colombia is accusing the ambassador of car theft, serious?

[Escovar] I would rather have the Foreign Ministry answer that question, since this is not within my purview.

In regard to the CGT congress, Escovar Salom said it is a union of a long tradition in the country and its leaders have made very hard efforts to maintain it, that is why it groups so many representatives of the labor organizations.

Escovar Salom reiterated that neither disturbances nor violent actions, nor the torching of buses will be allowed.

[Escovar] The government will allow and respect all peaceful public demonstrations.

Caracas, IMF To Expedite Talks To Solve Crisis

PA1512044595 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Venezuela and the IMF on 14 December agreed to expedite the negotiations that will allow our country to get the financing necessary to face the economic crisis. The cards are read, and there is an intention, which seems imminent, of granting credit. Aida Raygada reports from Washington, where the IMF headquarters are located.

[Begin recording] [Raygada] At the beginning of this second round of negotiations, Finance Minister Luis Raul Matos Azocar talked for one hour with IMF Director Michel Camdessus. Upon the end of the meeting, there were many smiles; handshakes; and, it seems, indications of an upcoming agreement.

[Camdessus] The Venezuelan Government is working hard on a Venezuelan agenda to try to resolve the very difficult problems your country is facing regarding the macroeconomic context of the confidence on the markets, which triggered the banking crisis that has already cost too much to the country. In order to study these problems and seek solutions, the Venezuelan Government has asked us to advise it and help it. That is what we are here for. We expect this process, which is difficult because there are huge issues to resolve, will rely on the confidence and ability of your country's economy and on the ability of your people. I do not understand why problems that have been solved elsewhere in the world cannot be solved in a country that has so many human and natural resources, your country. However, I am confident that, with the leadership of the government, there will be a big effort to reach a national consensus on what is necessary to do in order to implement this program, which, I repeat, is a Venezuelan program [words indistinct] international program.

[Matos] They are willing to reach agreements on extra work, if necessary, for us to be able to sign an accord, which, by the way, he accepted within the framework of the Venezuelan Agenda, thus constituting a significant aspect.

[Raygada] A little bit later, the Venezuelan delegation, made up also of Antonio Casas Gonzalez, Central Bank of Venezuela president, met with Enrique Iglesias, Inter-American Development Bank [IDB] president, who supported the decisions the Caldera administration has made lately.

[Iglesias] I believe that, here in Washington, there is a willingness to support Venezuela's economic reorganization plans, and I believe that the country, as I have said more than once, has all the conditions to resolve its problems. The minister will find here a willingness, of course from the IDB, to help. It is very important for us to support the Venezuelan Government and people in this phase, and we will gladly do it.

[Raygada] Here in Washington, there are indications of a true possibility of the IMF and Venezuela reaching an agreement. [end recording]

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Cordiplan Minister: 'Optimism' on Talks

PA1512043695 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of Cordiplan [Coordinating and Planning] Minister Edgar Paredes Pizzani, the negotiations our country are carrying out with the IMF are going well and there is optimism that they will be happily concluded.

He says that points on the Venezuela Agenda are not isolated and are accompanied with social policies, reactivation of the productive economy, and structural reforms. He announced that his office signed with the World Bank a preagreement for the entire program of structural reforms that our country hopes to carry out.

[Begin Paredes recording] First, to restructure the organization of public administration, according to what has already been established in the follow-up commission of the public administration restructure, headed by the Cordiplan minister. Second, a new public sector policy covering employment, salaries, and training. Third, an in-depth review of the decentralization process. [end recording]

Regarding salary policies, the minister said that this needs to be studied very carefully because public salary scales are in disorder, but it is hoped that a new system will be begun in 1996.

[Begin Paredes recording] We need to redefine all the salary scales. Due to all those disjointed policies of general increases, bonuses, and so forth, public sector salary scales are too much in disarray. There are many studies and various proposals from the Central Personnel Office, out of which we will have to select and agree on one, and start off in 1996 with a new remuneration system, or salary scale, promotion incentives, and so forth. [end recording]

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